

10 FEBRUARY 2020

REPORT TITLE	HILLVIEW ROAD AREA, IRBY – PROPOSED TRAFFIC CALMING AND 20MPH SPEED LIMIT
REPORT OF	MARK SMITH, INTERIM DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS AND STREETSCENE

REPORT SUMMARY

This report considers objections to the proposed traffic calming and 20mph introduction in the Hillview Road Area, Irby as shown on plan DC/0562/100. These proposals have been prioritised as part of the 2019 / 20 Transport Plan for Growth Programme.

One of the key themes in the Wirral Plan vision is a pledge to improve the local environment. By discouraging rat-running traffic, ensuring lower speeds on residential roads and generally making roads safer for cyclists, pedestrians and other road users, this scheme will contribute to two of the key priorities within the current plan - Wirral neighbourhoods are safe and that Wirral residents live healthier lives.

This matter affects Greasby, Frankby and Irby Ward.

This matter does not require a Key Decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Cabinet Member for Community Services is requested to:

- (1) Note the objections received and the Officers' responses; and
- (2) Approve the proposed Traffic Calming with 20 mph speed limit for the Hillview Road area as shown on attached drawing no. DC/0562/100 for implementation.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 This proposal was approved by the Wirral West Constituency Committee in March 2019 and is included within the 2019/20 Transport Plan for Growth Capital Programme. The Council is committed to improving road safety across the Borough.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 As part of the design process Officers investigated alternative measures including the possibility of providing a signed only 20 mph speed limit on the roads included within the scheme.
- 2.2 The Department for Transport indicate in Circular 01/2013 that in order to achieve compliance, speed limits should be set so that there is no expectation on the police to provide additional enforcement. For 20 mph speed limits mean speeds should be at or less than 24mph. A speed and volume survey conducted in May 2017 showed the mean speed on the Sandy Lane – Hillview Road route is 26 mph with 85th percentile speeds at 32mph. Officers consider that a 20 mph speed limit by signs only would not effectively achieve the scheme objectives to reduce the speed and volume of traffic or comply with the advice from the DfT.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 On the 1st February 2019, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority awarded £1,150,000 of Integrated Transport Block funding to Wirral Council, to support the delivery of the Liverpool City Region Transport Plan for Growth.
- 3.2 Residents petitioned the Council in October 2015 for measures to reduce the volume and speed of traffic using the route along Sandy Lane and Hillview Road to avoid Irby village centre. A scheme to provide speed reduction measures was approved by the Wirral West Constituency Committee in March 2019.
- 3.3 The proposed scheme forms part of the 2019/20 Transport Plan for Growth Capital Programme of Works subsequently approved by the Cabinet at its meeting of 25th March 2019 [Minute No. 70 refers].
- 3.4 This decision is being made under the updated Council Constitution approved by the Cabinet on 24th June 2019 [Minute 7 refers] and approved by Council at its meeting on 15th July 2019.

4.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 4.1 As part of the consultation exercise for this scheme letters were delivered to 212 local residents in the vicinity of the scheme, informing them of the proposals. In addition, direct consultation has been undertaken with Party Spokespersons, Ward Members, Active Travel Forum, Emergency Services, Freight Transport Association, Road Haulage Association, and Merseytravel. Notices of intent for the scheme were also publicly advertised.

4.2 During the consultation exercise fourteen individual objections (6.6% of households consulted) were received against the proposals. Our records also show that twenty people (9.4% of households consulted) contacted the Council during the consultation period to express specific support of the proposals. The outstanding objections are summarised as follows:-

4.2.1 An objector states that putting speed humps along this road will serve only to constantly annoy residents whilst having a negligible effect on road safety in the area.

In response; Vertical traffic calming features have a proven history in improving road safety in locations where they are introduced. Such measures ensure compliance with lower speed limits by vehicular traffic. The Department for Transport advise physical measures should be introduced where mean speeds are at or above 24 mph to ensure lower speed limits are self-enforcing speeds. The speed of traffic on Hillview Road & Sandy Lane was surveyed in 2017 at 26mph average with an 85thile speed of 32 mph.

4.2.2 An objector states that speed humps along Hillview Road will only further complicate the manoeuvres necessary to pass all cars which are frequently parked along the road.

In response; Speed humps along Hillview Road will be constructed across the full width of the carriageway (excluding 200mm from kerb face for drainage) therefore passing cars will follow the same path as they do now.

4.2.3 An objector states there is no need for speed bumps because the parked cars naturally slow the traffic.

In response; The speed humps will be a permanent feature whereas you cannot rely on the presence of parked cars. The speed of traffic on Hillview Road & Sandy Lane was surveyed in 2017 at 26mph average with an 85thile speed of 32 mph. The proposed measures will assure a self-enforcing route.

4.2.4 An objector states that the Council should spend its limited money elsewhere.

In response; Funds for this scheme have been prioritised through the Wirral West Constituency Committee utilising capital funding allocated by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

4.2.5 An objector states that the traffic calming scheme is not needed, cars do not speed and to slow them down any further would only increase traffic congestion.

In response; The speed of traffic on Hillview Road & Sandy Lane was surveyed in 2017 at 26mph average with an 85thile speed of 32 mph and that that 14% of vehicles are exceeding the current 30 mph legal speed limit. The proposed measures will assure a self-enforcing route. It is not envisaged that congestion will be increased due to a lower speed limit.

4.2.6 An objector states that the Council is allegedly in austerity measures - spend the money on something that is needed.

In response; Funds for this scheme have been prioritised through the Wirral West Constituency Committee utilising capital funding allocated by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

- 4.2.7 An objector states that if speed humps were constructed on Sandy Lane and Hillview Road, motorists would use Norton Drive as a 'cut through' to avoid speed humps to reach Sandy Lane / Sandy Lane North / Thorstone Road and that motorists will not adhere to the 20 miles per hour Traffic Regulation Order.

In response; It is not proposed to introduce physical measures on the section of Sandy Lane between Hillview Road and Thorstone Drive and it is therefore unlikely that traffic flows will increase on Norton Drive or create a cut through.

A 20 miles per hour Traffic Regulation Order will accompany the physical traffic calming measures. The proposed traffic calming features will help to self-enforce the 20mph speed limit. If, there is evidence of speeding following the introduction of this project the Council will request enforcement action of the 20 miles per hour speed limit from Merseyside Police or additional physical measures could be considered.

- 4.2.8 An objector states that they are not aware of any severe accidents or fatalities within the scheme area.

In response; This scheme was developed as a result of a petition submitted by local residents and approved by the Wirral West Constituency Committee in March 2019. It was a scheme to address speed and volume of vehicles travelling through the area.

- 4.2.9 An objector states that throughout any 24 hour period there are vehicles always parked on Hillview Road making it impossible to drive quickly or recklessly and have never noticed anyone driving at excessive speeds in Sandy Lane either.

In response; The speed of traffic on Hillview Road & Sandy Lane was surveyed in 2017 at 26mph average with an 85thile speed of 32 mph and that that 14% of vehicles are exceeding the current 30 mph legal speed limit. The proposed measures will assure a self-enforcing 20 mph route.

- 4.2.10 An objector states that it's a quiet, residential area and that the scheme is a waste of public funds and totally unnecessary. The cost of these works along with associated signage would be better spent elsewhere.

In response; Funds for this scheme have been prioritised through the Wirral West Constituency Committee utilising capital funding allocated by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

- 4.2.11 An objector states that there has never been a serious accident or injury on the roads covered by the scheme.

In response; This scheme was developed as a result of a petition submitted by local residents and approved by the Wirral West Constituency Committee in March 2019. It was a scheme to address speed and volume of vehicles travelling through the area.

4.2.12 An objector states that Sandy Lane and Hillview Road have always been a through route to bypass Irby Village. The problem is traffic volume not speeding on these two roads.

In response; Vertical traffic calming features may discourage drivers from using this route as a cut through and therefore reduce the volume of traffic. The speed of traffic on Hillview Road & Sandy Lane was surveyed in 2017 at 26mph average with an 85th percentile speed of 32 mph and that that 14% of vehicles are exceeding the current 30 mph legal speed limit. The proposed measures will assure a self-enforcing 20 mph route.

4.2.13 An objector states that other than the through route section of Sandy Lane and Hillview Road all other roads in the proposed scheme are short quiet cul-de-sacs with no speed problems and additional signage for a 20mph limit in these side roads would be a waste of money.

In response; Physical traffic calming measures are only required on Hillview Road and a section of Sandy Lane to ensure a self-enforcing 20 mph route. Other roads will benefit from becoming incorporated in the wider 20mph zone. In order to implement a scheme of this nature it is sensible to include other minor roads in the zone area which will assist reducing sign clutter as the need for terminal speed limit signs is eliminated. Funds for this scheme have been prioritised through the Wirral West Constituency Committee utilising capital funding allocated by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and approved by Cabinet.

4.2.14 An objector states that the area is semi-rural in appearance. The visual impact of speed bumps, road markings, signage and street furniture will make the area look like a troubled inner city estate.

In response; Schemes of this nature can be implemented in a variety of areas to reduce traffic speed and volume.

4.2.15 An objector states that the speed bumps will cause additional noise and air pollution. Vehicles on the through route will have to brake, bounce and accelerate 7 times. Large farm vehicles and trailers use this route regularly and are noisy enough without bouncing over hurdles.

In response; it is not envisaged that pollution will increase significantly as a result of the proposals. It is not expected that the proposals will increase traffic levels in the area other than those already expected. In addition, with technological advances in the motor industry it is likely that there will be more hybrid and electric vehicles on the borough's roads in the future reducing air pollution and noise.

4.2.16 An objector states that they have a small low car (mini) and the speed bumps will put excessive wear on my suspension and tyres.

In response; Department for Transport studies have revealed that vehicles travelling over road humps at appropriate speeds should not suffer damage, provided the humps conform to the Highway (Road Hump) Regulations.

4.2.17 An objector states the gradient of Sandy Lane and Hillview Road are deceptively steep. In winter these roads are not gritted by the council and any icy conditions make it very difficult to reach the main road. Speed bumps will make it impossible in icy conditions.

In response; This scheme has been designed within Department for Transport guidelines for every aspect of the proposals including the gradient of the carriageway and the gradients for the ramps. There are no significant gradients on roads within the scheme area.

4.2.18 An objector states that the scheme is trying to resolve a speeding problem and not the real issue of traffic volume.

In response; Schemes of this nature are proven to reduce vehicle speeds and make the route less desirable to through traffic which will decrease traffic volume.

4.2.19 An objector states they support the installation of a 20mph zone and would suggest the erection of solar panel powered speed recognition screens at the halfway points in each of Sandy Lane and Hillview Road.

In response; This scheme will be designed using the Department for Transport guidelines, any additional traffic calming features can be included in a future programme of works if deemed necessary.

4.2.20 An objector states they oppose the installation of the speed bumps because they will cause environmental pollution.

In response; it is not envisaged that pollution will increase significantly as a result of the proposals. It is not expected that the proposals will increase traffic levels in the area other than those already expected. In addition, with technological advances in the motor industry it is likely that there will be more hybrid and electric vehicles on the borough's roads in the future reducing air pollution and noise.

4.2.21 An objector states they oppose the installation of the speed bumps because heavy farm vehicles and heavily laden trailers use Sandy Lane and Hillview Road for access to and from the local farmland. These are frequently followed by sweepers to clean up spillages and will not be able to properly clean the roads around speed bumps.

In response; The proposed speed humps will be constructed across the full width of the carriageway (excluding 200mm from kerb face for drainage). This will not impede any farm vehicles or road sweepers in accessing/maintaining the area.

4.2.22 An objector states they oppose the installation of the speed bumps because satellite navigation systems direct Heavy Goods Vehicles along Sandy Lane and Hillview Road.

In response; Officers will contact the satellite navigation providers in order to inform them of this traffic calmed route.

4.2.23 An objector states that in snowy weather the bumps will be less recognisable, causing vehicles to lose stability.

In response; It would be expected of people to drive with due care and attention in any weather conditions and speed humps should not impose any change to the stability of the vehicle. Road humps are successfully used on other highways within the Borough with no known adverse issues reported during inclement weather.

4.2.24 An objector states that Wirral Borough Council does not have a great record of maintaining traffic calming measures and that badly maintained speed bumps become a hazard for vehicles inflicting damage particularly to the inside walls of car tyres. Such damage is not easily observed until vehicles are presented for their annual inspections.

In response; Drivers should undertake regular inspection of their vehicles, including condition of the tyres. The highway is monitored on a regular basis and actionable defects repaired promptly.

4.2.25 An objector states that it should be noted that in his letter of 19th November, 2015, David Rees, Road Safety Manager, W.B.C. stated, 'Based on its existing good safety record, Hillview Road does not meet the council's criteria for traffic calming'.

In response; In 2015 analysis of the road safety records did not meet the Council's criteria for Traffic Calming Measures as a Local Safety Scheme, however this scheme was prioritised by the Wirral West Constituency Committee utilising capital funding allocated by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

4.2.26 An objector states that the 20mph limits in Edgemoor Drive, Lester Drive, Leachway, Frost Drive, Norton Drive as a waste of money, and disfigurement of the environment.

In response; In order to implement a scheme of this nature it is necessary to include other roads in the area which will actually reduce sign clutter as the need for terminal speed limit signs is reduced. Funds for this scheme have been allocated through the Wirral West Constituency Committee utilising capital funding allocated by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

4.2.27 An objector states the proposed road humps on Hillview Road will increase environmental pollution for residents, as all vehicles will be forced to constantly change down through lower gears and then change up again as they speed up between humps.

In response; Placement of the features is designed to encourage steady progress through the scheme avoiding the need to change gear repeatedly. It is not envisaged that pollution will increase significantly as a result of the proposals. It is not expected that the proposals will increase traffic levels in the area other than those already expected. In addition, with technological advances in the motor industry it is likely that there will be more hybrid and electric vehicles on the borough's roads in the future.

4.2.28 An objector states the constant backing up of traffic as it stops for each speed hump will create significantly increased congestion in both directions, on a road which already has a high volume of cars parked on both sides of the road/pavements.

In response; The scheme is designed in accordance with the guidelines set by the Department for Transport. It is not intended that vehicles will stop at each hump and the placement of the features is designed to encourage steady progress through the scheme.

4.2.29 An objector states the proposed 20 mph speed limit and signs on Frost Drive are an unnecessary expenditure and requirement in a short cul-de-sac.

In response; In order to implement a scheme of this nature it is necessary to include other roads in the area which will actually reduce sign clutter as the need for terminal speed limit signs is reduced. Funds for this scheme have been allocated through the Wirral West Constituency Committee utilising capital funding allocated by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

4.2.30 An objector states there is a high risk of pushing additional traffic into Irby village via Mill Hill Road causing congestion and delays to local residents and public transport.

In response; It is envisaged that any diverted traffic will use the local distributor roads rather than the residential roads of Sandy Lane and Hillview Road. These distributor roads are designed to accommodate higher volumes of traffic. Traffic flows will be monitored for any adverse effects.

4.2.31 An objector states the scheme is not required for the area after speaking to many residents along Hillview Road and Sandy Lane who appear to be surprised by the news.

In response; This scheme has been prioritised through the Wirral West Constituency forum which is guided by residents and local members. The Council also received a petition for traffic calming to be considered in Hillview Road in 2015.

4.2.32 An objector states the scheme will cheapen the area and potentially effect house prices.

In response; there is no evidence to suggest that the proposals will have a negative effect on property values.

4.2.33 An objector states the scheme is a waste of council resources and money.

In response; This scheme was developed as a result of a petition submitted by local residents and approved by the Wirral West Constituency Committee in March 2019. It was a scheme to address speed and volume of vehicles travelling through the area.

4.2.34 An objector states the scheme will cause damage to vehicles using these roads.

In response; Department for Transport studies have revealed that vehicles travelling over road humps at appropriate speeds should not suffer damage, provided the humps conform to the Highway (Road Hump) Regulations.

4.2.35 An objector states petitions should be treated with caution as signatories do not always have any interest or opinion in the subject matter.

In response; Funding for this scheme was prioritised by the Wirral West Constituency Committee in March 2019.

4.2.36 An objector states that there is no history of road traffic collisions or near misses.

In response; Although this area has a current good 5 year road safety record, this scheme has been proposed in order to alleviate residents' concerns regarding volume and speed of traffic.

4.2.37 An objector states the presence of road humps can cause more greenhouse gases and annoyance for residents with vehicles accelerating and slowing in between each hump.

In response; it is not envisaged that pollution will increase significantly as a result of the proposals. It is not expected that the proposals will increase traffic levels in the area other than those already expected. In addition, with technological advances in the motor industry it is likely that there will be more hybrid and electric vehicles on the borough's roads in the future.

4.2.38 An objector states the introduction of a traffic calming scheme will not improve road safety within the area and does not recall having ever witnessed vehicles travelling at excessive speed or being driven irresponsibly. In respect of the proposed 20mph speed limit, who will enforce it, if indeed there is any enforcement to be done?

In response; The speed of traffic on Hillview Road & Sandy Lane was surveyed in 2017 at 26mph average with an 85thile speed of 32 mph and that that 14% of vehicles are exceeding the current 30 mph legal speed limit. Merseyside Police are the enforcing authority for speed limits in Wirral however with the introduction of physical traffic calming measures the speed limit will be largely self-enforcing.

4.2.39 An objector states the introduction of a scheme is quite ludicrous and will detract from the appearance of the area and be of no tangible benefit to residents, motorists or pedestrians.

In response; The benefit of the scheme is to reduce vehicle speeds and volume of traffic making the area more accessible to vulnerable road users, and encourage more pedestrians and cyclists, therefore reducing motor vehicle usage.

4.2.40 An objector states the cost of introducing a scheme is a complete waste of council funds and there is no factual evidence to justify the spend associated with such a scheme.

In response; This scheme was developed as a result of a petition submitted by local residents and approved by the Wirral West Constituency Committee, which is guided by residents and elected members, in March 2019. It was a scheme to address speed and volume of vehicles travelling through the area.

4.2.41 An objector states Leach Way does not need such measures.

In response; Leach Way will be included within the 20 miles per hour zone, however no physical traffic calming measures are proposed in this cul-de-sac. To exclude Leach Way from this scheme would increase sign clutter as extra speed limit terminal signs would be required.

4.2.42 An objector asks what assessment or study has been undertaken and with what outcome to suggest the need for the proposed traffic calming because they have not personally seen excessive speeds, nor excessive traffic.

In response; The speed of traffic on Hillview Road & Sandy Lane was surveyed in 2017 at 26mph average with an 85thile speed of 32 mph and that that 14% of vehicles are exceeding the current 30 mph legal speed limit. The proposed measures will assure a self-enforcing 20 mph route. The survey also shows that approximately 1800 vehicles travel along Sandy Lane and Hillview Road each day.

4.2.43 An objector states the surrounding streets have been plagued over recent months by motorbikes cutting through the pedestrian path at the top of Thorstone Drive connecting through from Mill Hill Road, and driving down Thorstone and onward to Sandy Lane. If the aim is to calm traffic and reduce the risk of casualties, what steps will be taken with these proposed works to address this issue, whilst maintaining a safe thoroughfare for pedestrians.

In response; Road humps will be located along the south section of Sandy Lane which will make the alleged route by motorbikes less appealing. Any instances of motorbikes illegally using the pedestrian path at the top of Thorstone Drive can be reported to Merseyside Police who are the enforcing authority for such matters.

4.2.44 An objector asks if the proposed traffic calming solution be appropriate to calm motorbike traffic.

In response; Motorbike traffic will be required to negotiate the speed humps and adhere to the 20 miles per hour speed limit. The proposed speed humps will be constructed across the full width of the carriageway (excluding 200mm from kerb face for drainage).

4.2.45 An objector states they would support lowering of the speed limit to 20mph, but not for the use of road obstructions (unless a study supports the need).

In response; The Department for Transport studies show that the introduction of traffic calming measures will help to limit the speed of vehicles to the legal 20 miles per hour speed limit. The speed of traffic on Hillview Road & Sandy Lane was surveyed in 2017 at 26mph average with an 85thile speed of 32 mph

and that that 14% of vehicles are exceeding the current 30 mph legal speed limit. The proposed measures will assure a self-enforcing 20 mph route.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The projected cost of implementing these works is approximately £16,000 which will be funded from the 2019/2020 Transport Plan for Growth Capital Programme of works.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no specific implications under this heading arising from the recommendation of this report.

6.2 The maintenance of highways, promotion of road safety and the management of traffic are statutory duties for the Council.

6.3 The Council has a statutory duty to communicate and consult specific customers for highway improvement schemes where it intends to implement traffic calming; Traffic Regulation Orders (restricting access, waiting or parking); or to alter the speed limit under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

7.1 Existing staff resources will be used to deliver this project.

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

8.1 Failure to undertake the proposed scheme would result in a failure to support the priorities of the Liverpool City Region Transport Plan for Growth and the Council's existing Corporate Goals and Objectives.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

9.1 Consultation for these proposals has been carried out according to the following guiding principles for fair consultation:

- It should be at a time when proposals are at a formative stage;
- Must include sufficient reasons for particular proposals to allow those consulted to give intelligent consideration and an intelligent response;
- Those consulted should be made aware of the factors that are of decisive relevance to the decision;
- Adequate time should be given for consideration and response;
- The product of the consultation should be conscientiously taken into account by the decision makers in finalising their statutory proposals/ when the ultimate decision is taken.

9.2 As part of the consultation exercise for this scheme letters were delivered to local residents in the vicinity of the scheme, informing them of the proposals. In addition, consultation was undertaken with Party Spokespersons, Ward Members, Active Travel Forum, Emergency Services, Freight Transport Association, Road Haulage Association and Merseytravel.

10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(a) Yes and impact review is attached

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2017/delivery>

11.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Reducing traffic speeds on minor roads can assist in providing a safer residential environment as well as the perception of a safer road environment encouraging greater levels of walking and cycling as well as discouraging the use of private motor cars. Such measures can lead to a positive environmental/climate change.

REPORT AUTHOR: Carl Amos
Senior Network Manager – Delivery Services
telephone: (0151) 606 2370
email: carlamos@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

Drawing No. DC/0562/100 – Proposed Traffic Calming features and 20mph Speed Limit plan

Drawing No. DC/0562/101 – Supporters/Objectors plan

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. The proposed scheme forms part of the 2019/20 Transport Plan for Growth Capital Programme of Works (Integrated Transport Block - ITB) subsequently agreed by Cabinet at its meeting of 25th March 2019 [Minute 70 refers].
2. Documentation published by the Department for Transport in Circular Roads 01/13 has been used in the preparation of this report.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Cabinet (Minute 70)	25 March 2019