
Meeting: Traffic Management Meeting

Date: 20 March 2014

Subject: Slapton Road, Little Billington - To Consider Representations to Proposed Road Humps

Report of: Paul Mason, Head of Highways

Summary: This report seeks the approval of the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services for the installation of road humps in Slapton Road, Little Billington

Contact Officer: Nick Chapman
nick.chapman@amey.co.uk

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: Eaton Bray

Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The proposal will improve road safety.

Financial:

The scheme is being funded through the Leighton-Linslade LAMP process.

Legal:

None from this report.

Risk Management:

None from this report.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None from this report

Equalities/Human Rights:

None from this report

Community Safety:

The proposal will improve road safety for all road users, but in particular will address local residents' concerns about excessive vehicle speed in Slapton Road.

Sustainability:

The proposal will support and encourage walking and cycling in line with approved CBC policy.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the proposals to install two road humps in Slapton Road be implemented as published.

Background and Information

1. Billington Parish Council and local residents have for some years been concerned about the speed of traffic using Slapton Road through Little Billington. In recent months the situation has been exacerbated by horse boxes and other larger vehicles passing through to access locations, some of which are sited across the county boundary. Discussions with the Parish Council have taken place to agree a suitable traffic calming scheme.
2. When considering the characteristics of the road and the budget available it has been agreed that two round-top road humps at the location shown on the drawing in Appendix B would significantly reduce vehicle speeds. The road hump locations have been chosen to coincide with street lights, for safety reasons and to avoid the need for additional street lighting upgrades and related costs.
3. The proposal was advertised by public notice in February 2014. Consultations were carried out with the emergency services and other statutory bodies, Billington Parish Council and relevant Elected Members. Residents of Slapton Road were informed and notices were displayed on street.
4. One objection and five representations, one offering support, have been received. Copies of the correspondence are included in Appendix C. The main points raised by the objector are summarised below:-
 - a) For journeys to and from their home they will need to pass over the humps and there are concerns about damage to their vehicle.
 - b) The road humps will not be effective at slowing traffic down because some drivers will drive over them at excessive speeds.
5. The other representations are not opposed to the planned road humps, but ask for more measures to be installed. Two suggest that another hump is required further south on Slapton Road, as you enter the built-up area, possibly near Grovebury Turn. The other two ask for another hump near to the bend adjacent to Rose Cottage.
6. Bedfordshire Police have been formally consulted as part of the process and have raised no objections to the proposals.

Responses and Conclusion

7. The Highways Team response to the points raised above are as follows:-
 - a) The scheme comprises only two road humps which are not considered to represent a significant hindrance to drivers. They have been designed in accordance with Regulations and published technical guidance. If motorists drive appropriately and at a suitable speed the road humps will not cause any vehicular damage.
 - b) Evidence indicates that physical traffic calming measures are an effective means of reducing vehicle speeds. It is expected that the proposals will moderate the speed of the majority of drivers and hence bring about a noticeable reduction in overall speeds.
8. In response to the other representations; ideally further traffic calming measures would have been proposed, but they had to be tailored to the available budget. However, the proposals are still considered to be proportionate in terms of addressing local concerns about speed, but not creating an unreasonable hindrance to through traffic. Given the number of larger vehicles, including horse boxes, that use the road, more humps located closer to residential premises could be opposed by some people. The bend near Rose Cottage is in itself a slowing feature, so a road hump at that location is not felt to be necessary.
9. In summary, it is considered that the proposed road humps are reasonable and will be effective at addressing local concerns. All of the householders living on this stretch of Slapton Road were individually consulted and only one objection was received, which strongly suggests that the majority support the proposal, albeit some would like to see more done.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Public Notice for Proposed Road Humps

Appendix B – Drawing of Proposed Road Humps

Appendix C – Representations

PUBLIC NOTICE



HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 – SECTION 90A-I

PROPOSED ROAD HUMPS – SLAPTON ROAD, LITTLE BILLINGTON

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL, in exercise of its powers under Section 90 A-I of the Highways Act 1980 and all other enabling powers, proposes to construct road humps under Section 90 A-I of the Highways Act 1980 and all other enabling powers in Slapton Road, Little Billington. These works are part of a scheme to reduce traffic speeds and create a safer environment for residents.

Road Humps at a nominal height of 75mm and approximately 3.7 metres long, including ramps, extending across the full width of the road, except for drainage channels either side, are proposed to be sited at the following locations in Little Billington:-

1. Slapton Road, at a point approximately 50 metres south of Willow Tree Cottage
2. Slapton Road, at a point approximately 30 metres south of Cape Farm

Further Details a drawing may be examined during normal opening hours at Leighton Buzzard Library, Lake Street, Leighton Buzzard LU7 1RX or online at www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/publicstatutorynotices.

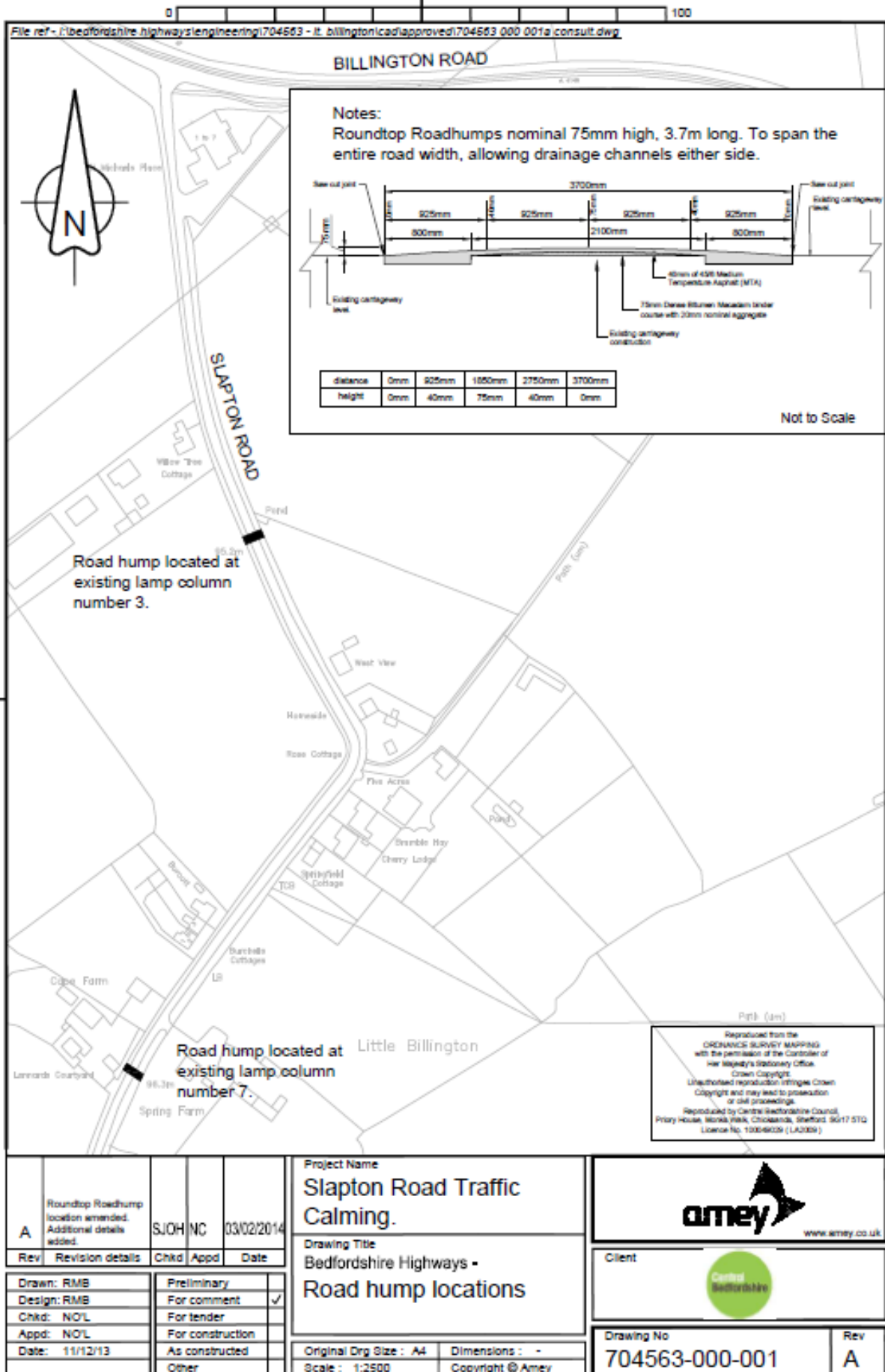
Comments should be sent in writing to the Transportation Manager, Central Bedfordshire Highways, Woodlands Annex, Manton Lane, Bedford MK41 7NU or e-mail centralbedsconsultation@amey.co.uk
18 February 2014.

Central Bedfordshire Council
Priory House
Chicksands
Shefford SG1917 5TQ

Marcel Coiffait
Director of Community Services

4 February 2014

Appendix B



Appendix C

I feel it is a complete waste of money to install road humps in Slapton Road. As one of the oldest residents in the village and living over the hill it will mean that for each journey to Leighton I will have to travel over both the humps each way, and I have already had to have suspension springs replaced on my car at a cost of £100's due to the humps in Leighton & Linslade. It will do nothing to address the excessive vehicle speeds of the Travelling Community because they have humps on their own lane leading to the pitches and any observer hearing their screeching brakes, will see that it does nothing to slow them but the increase in noise levels as their lorries with their contents bump over them is very disturbing. The real problem in the village are the horse boxes and they are not speeding but again the noise disturbance and the massive wear & tear on the road surface plus having to constantly back-up to pass them on the hill can be very dangerous and a motor cyclist recently had his bike written off by an AA van that reversed without warning because a horse box was coming down the hill. The owner of the equestrian centre in Bucks refuses to request his clients to turn right from the centre to gain access to the by-pass because it would disturb the Slapton residents and he does not want to upset them, yet Bucks benefits from the rates he pays not Beds.

I would be most grateful if you could check the records as I seem to remember that speed humps were installed many years ago in the village and then removed, please do not waste our money there must be a way of getting the guidance systems to direct the horses boxes to use the alternative route or to put up signs on the bypass directing them to Slapton. The least expensive solution is a weight restriction.

I attach an example of why a third speed bump is needed further south on Slapton Road on the approach into Little Billington from Slapton to make the traffic calming measures effective, ideally, somewhere, perhaps halfway between, Spring Meadow and Grovebury Turn. This photo was taken this morning. The driver clearly lost control as he approached the bend too fast evidenced by a trail of debris and tyre marks on the verge as he approached. He was lucky not to hit the telegraph pole (just out of shot).

The travellers turned up in force to heave the vehicle out of the ditch and kindly left 3 pieces of the front end of the car in our side of the ditch.....

I said to xxx and the PC that we needed calming further up the road - I know it might cost for another light but in the grand scheme of things it is nothing.

Many incidents and near misses go unrecorded, as would this one, had you not been around. It is time the nettle was grasped.....

We have always been of the opinion that a road hump should be on the straight part of road near the start of the 30mph limit to slow drivers down as they approach Grovebury Turn and the right hand bend (from Slapton direction) and to discourage those travelling in the other direction from accelerating away from the bend. This particular driver was travelling at speed downhill as do so many others. If there had been a hump the driver would have had to slow down and would not have ended up in the ditch.....lucky nobody was walking to Grovebury Turn as they could have been badly injured or worse. We do not exaggerate the issues we have at this location.....so many near misses.....and it will only get worse, so hope you will re-think this.

Surely better to put in another street light and move the 30mph sign further up the hill before there is a fatality.

We were very disappointed to see the proposals, which still appear unsuitable despite the prior consultation.

The main issue for us, which we understood that the humps were intended to address, is that cars are driven around the corner in the village dangerously fast - we have frequently witnessed cars sliding sideways, wheels screeching. The corner is blind so it seems that there is the potential for an accident with a car coming in the other direction, as well as a risk that a car ends up in our front garden (which we understand happened many years ago).

The speed humps proposed seem to be located far too far from the corner itself to ease this problem. In our view, the humps should be closer to West View (to the north) and Springfield Cottage (to the south). Where they are proposed they would leave time for cars to accelerate before the corner in either direction, defeating the object of the exercise.

We should be grateful if you would give consideration to the above. We would be happy to discuss this if that would be helpful.

I note the proposed positions of the speed humps and I'm left wondering why they are so far apart. I can understand why you would put one outside Spring Farm slowing traffic down before the bend, but there seems to be no provision for humps from Rose Cottage corner through the village to the Spring Farm hump. Therefore nothing to calm traffic racing through the village and no hump to calm traffic entering the Rose Cottage corner. A sharper corner than the one at Spring Farm I might add. At the moment with only 2 humps proposed it will create a challenge for the less considerate motorists in the community to put their foot down once they've got over the Spring Farm hump and accelerate at full speed up to Rose Cottage corner, creating unwanted traffic noise outside our houses and increasing the chance of accidents.

I propose therefore, that the council consider one more hump around the middle of the village where there is streetlighting, and would calm traffic which surely is the object of the exercise.

I would also ask the council to note that there has been a huge increase in the number of very large horseboxes travelling through the village to and from Bury Farm in Slapton. It is only a matter of time before a car travelling at speed towards Rose Cottage corner meets a horsebox coming round at the same time. An accident waiting to happen I suggest!

One more hump would prevent that, and calm traffic where it's most needed.