
Meeting: Delegated Decisions by the Executive Member for Community Services on Traffic Regulation Orders
Date: 17th June 2015
Subject: Bedford Road, Houghton Conquest – Consider Options for Traffic Calming Scheme
Report of: Paul Mason, Head of Highways
Summary: This report considers alternative speed reducing measures for Bedford Road Houghton Conquest and requests the approval of the Executive Member for Community Services for the installation of Traffic Calming Measures in Bedford Road, Houghton Conquest

Contact Officer: Nick Chapman
nick.chapman@amey.co.uk
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: Houghton Conquest and Haynes
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

This proposal supports the following council priorities:

- Enhancing your local community – creating jobs, managing growth, protecting our countryside and enabling businesses to grow.
- Promote health and well being and protect the vulnerable
- Better infrastructure – improved roads, broadband reach and transport

Financial:

The overall cost of the scheme will be approximately £59,600.

The budget for this comes from Local Area Transport Plan allocations as specified in Central Bedfordshire's Local Transport Plan.

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 pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users in Blunham. This proposal will significantly increase the safety of pupils on the route to and from schools in the area.

Sustainability:

The proposal will support and encourage sustainable travel in line with approved CBC policy.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That having made full consideration of the relative costs and merits of alternative speed reducing measures the proposal to install Traffic Calming Measures be implemented as published.

CBC Transport and Planning Policy

1. This scheme had been developed in line and in accord with Central Bedfordshire Council policies and priorities as outlined in:-

Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026 (*Adopted April 1st, 2011*)

- a) Appendix E Walking Strategy
- b) Appendix F Cycling Strategy
- c) Appendix X Transport Asset Management Plan

Local Area Transport Plan – Haynes and Old Warden (including Houghton Conquest) (*Adopted April 1st, 2013*)

2. All of these documents were fully consulted upon as part of their development process. All of these documents and the policies within them were formally adopted by CBC.

Background Information

3. The original scheme was developed to address issues related to speeding vehicles and road safety concerns. All these issues have been identified as points to be addressed by CBC officers and members as well as Houghton Conquest parish council.

4. Bedford Road is one of the main routes into Houghton Conquest. The road is relatively straight, with properties generally set back from the road, particularly at its north-west end. These factors tend to encourage higher traffic speeds.
5. The traffic calming scheme was formally advertised by public notice during December 2014 and January 2015. Consultations were carried out with the emergency services and other statutory bodies, Houghton Conquest Parish Council and the Ward Member. Residents living alongside this length of road were individually consulted.
6. A report was presented to the Delegated Decisions meeting held on 18th Feb 2015 that considered the objections received to the proposals but, on balance, recommended the implementation of the scheme as advertised. The original report is attached as Appendix A
7. At the meeting there were a number of speakers in support of the objections and questions were raised in respect of the possibility of looking at camera enforcement as an alternative to physical traffic calming.
8. As it was not possible to provide detailed responses to these questions at the meeting officers were asked to undertake a comparison of the possible alternatives and to report these back to the next available Delegated Decisions meeting for further consideration.
9. The options assessment was undertaken and is included as appendix B. It sets out the relative costs of the possible alternatives as well as providing pros and cons for them.
10. Whilst either type of camera enforcement would be possible, spot or average speed, both options are considerably more costly than the traffic calming scheme and would require annual maintenance none of which would currently be funded from any fines that might be generated from the cameras. In the case of the spot camera it would also be less effective as it would only control speed at the camera and for a short distance either side. It should be noted that the revenue from speeding fines goes to the exchequer.
11. The assessment report therefore concludes that the most cost effective solution is the physical calming as it is less costly to implement and does not carry a fixed annual maintenance cost, other than general highway maintenance as may be required, to be found from revenue budgets.

Representations and Responses

12. A total of 20 representations were received to the original proposal. Five were clear objections to the scheme, or elements of it. Two, including the Parish Council were in support. The remainder were a mixture of responses with general support for lowering traffic speeds but preferring other means of doing so, such as camera enforcement.

13. Having carried out a relative assessment of the options as requested the recommendation is that the traffic calming measures as originally proposed is the most cost effective method to reduce speeds in this location. It can be achieved within the original budget which has been carried forward to the current financial year. It is therefore requested that the traffic calming proposal be approved for implementation.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Previous Report

Appendix B - Options Assessment