

Part I

Electoral Divisions affected:
Preston North; and Preston
North West

Proposed Traffic Calming Scheme in the Larches area of Preston
(Appendices 'A', 'B1', 'B2' and 'C' refer)

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Executive Summary

Approval is sought for the installation of traffic calming measures in the Larches area of Preston following the period of public consultation and two objections having been received.

The proposed measures include a number of speed cushions and a junction table on Whinfield Lane, Larches Lane and Greavestown Lane.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the provisions of Standing Order No 25 have been complied with.

Recommendation

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport is asked to approve the installation of the proposed traffic calming measures as set out in this report and the schedule, plans and speed data attached at Appendices 'A', 'B1', 'B2' and 'C'.

Background and Advice

On the 18 July 2014 the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport approved a £1m programme of evidence based accident reduction measures. The programme included identification of locations of concern within the existing 20mph speed limit areas and consideration of strategic engineering measures that could be applied to these locations to improve road safety. The roads covered by this proposal have been identified as roads that would benefit from the introduction of traffic calming measures.

Lancashire County Council has received complaints of speeding through the Larches estate and investigations into the casualty record and traffic speeds at this location (shown at Appendix 'C') have led to the measures proposed. The measures are

designed to reduce vehicle speeds and improve compliance with the 20mph speed limit.

Consultations

Draft designs for the proposed measures were displayed at an informal drop-in session on 13 October 2015 at St Bernard's Club, Elswick Road to which local residents' were invited. Following comments received at the meeting some minor changes were made to the initial design and the revised design was taken to the formal consultation process. The proposal was advertised between 15 April 2016 and 13 May 2016.

Preston City Council, Lancashire Constabulary, Lancashire Ambulance Service, Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, Local Cycling Representatives and Local Members were consulted. The County Councillor for Preston North West has given his support for the proposed scheme and the County Councillor for Preston West has no objections.

During the consultation period two objections, one query and one comment were received. The query related to whether the County Council would cover damage to vehicle suspensions caused by travel over the speed cushions and the comment was from United Utilities who stated that whilst there are wastewater assets in the location no diversion works will be required and also provided specifications for any adjustments to manhole casting levels may be needed to match the new road surface levels.

The basis of the two objections are set out below:

1. A resident of Larches Lane specifically objects to the speed cushion being installed almost outside their driveway (speed cushions number 7 in the attached plans – Appendices 'A' and 'B'). They have four cars coming on and off the driveway daily and state that a speed cushion so close by is unreasonable.
2. A resident of Greavestown Lane objects specifically to the installation of speed cushions on Greavestown Lane. Their main objection is concerned with the effect vibrations, caused by traffic travelling over the speed cushions, may have on the structure of houses on Greavestown Lane. The resident states that houses along this stretch of road do not have concrete foundations and the houses sit directly on to clay and that traffic passing over the speed bumps will cause vibration in the ground which will be transmitted by the clay to the houses. The resident goes on to say the effect of "bumps" in the road is already evident. An existing "bump" in the road outside his property causes his house to shake when a bus passes over it and he believes this has contributed to the cracking of the rendering and its subsequent falling off. The resident contends that soft soils will attenuate the vibration, while the harder ground will transmit it and if a distance of 2m is likely to cause minor damage for areas with softer soil (as stated in a previous correspondence from LCC) it follows that this distance will increase in harder ground. The resident also states that surveys have shown, "the general rule-of-thumb is that the heavier

the building foundation, the greater the coupling loss as the vibration propagates from the ground into the building.”

The resident also objects to the speed humps on the following grounds:

3. Speeding in the area is no worse now than 10+ years ago
4. There have been no traffic incidents
5. The 20mph speed limit has reduced speed in the area
6. Residents he has spoken to do not want the speed tables
7. Additional noise will be produced by cars accelerating away from the speeds bumps

County Council's Response to the Objections

1. The speed cushions (number 7 in the plans) are close to, but not directly opposite, a driveway on Larches Lane. Vehicles should be able to turn into and out of the driveway without being affected by the speed cushions. Vehicles entering and leaving the driveway will only be travelling at a low speed and so will not be adversely affected by the presence of the speed cushions.
2. The suggestion that vibration caused by traffic passing over the speed cushions will cause damage to the properties on Greavestown Lane is not supported by advice in TAL 08/96. This states that cushions will not cause damage to properties provided they are at least 4 metres away. The properties on Greavestown Lane are at least 11 metres from the nearest speed cushion. Furthermore, a Transport and Road Research Laboratory Research Report (Number 246, Traffic Induced Vibrations in Buildings, 1990) concluded that there is no evidence to support the assertion that traffic vibration has a significant damaging effect on buildings.
3. Speed surveys carried out on Whinfield Lane, Larches Lane and Greavestown Lane 3 years after the introduction of the 20mph speed limit show that the mean speeds and 85th percentile speeds have not changed substantially from when the speed limit was 30mph (shown at Appendix 'C'). Since the speed limit has been lowered this effectively means that a higher proportion of drivers are exceeding the speed limit now that it is 20mph rather than 30mph.
4. Within the last 3 years there has been a total of 3 collisions (2 of them serious) on Greaves Town Lane, Larches Lane and Whinfield Lane resulting in 4 serious casualties and 4 slight casualties. In both serious collisions exceeding the speed limit was given as a causation factor.
5. As indicated above, traffic speeds have not changed substantially from when the speed limit was 30mph.

6. At the informal consultation event held in October 2015 most people attending were in favour of the scheme. Only two objections have been received through the formal consultation process.
7. There is no data to suggest that the introduction of speed humps will cause increased traffic noise by cars accelerating away from the speeds bumps.

In view of the traffic speeds, casualty records and complaints received from residents about traffic speeds it is recommended that approval is given to introduce the traffic calming measures proposed for Whinfield Lane, Larches Lane and Greavestown Lane.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Subsequent to the sign-only 20mph speed limit being introduced on the roads in the Larches Estate, vehicle speeds on the main road through the estate have not reduced significantly. There have been a number of collisions resulting in injuries as detailed above and concerns about this have been raised by local residents. This proposed scheme is designed to introduce physical traffic calming measures to reduce vehicle speeds through the estate with the aim of reducing the number and severity of collisions. If the scheme does not go ahead the potential road safety benefits of this scheme will not be realised.

Financial

The scheme would be funded from the resources set aside in the Evidence Based Accident Reduction Measures allocation from the 2014/15 Capital Programme at an estimated cost of £40,000.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A