

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 8 September 2022

Report of the Head of Service - Design and Construction

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
West Lancashire East;

Corporate Priorities:
Protecting our environment;

Ruff Lane, Ormskirk, Road Humps

(Appendices 'A' and 'B' refer)

Contact for further information:

Essa Moosa, Tel: (01772) 530095, Assistant Highway Engineer,
mohamedessa.moosa@lancashire.gov.uk

Brief Summary

As part of proposals for a cycle safety scheme, a series of road humps is proposed on Ruff Lane, Ormskirk, between Knowsley Road and Beech Meadow. This report summarises the proposals and provides details of the formal advertising and consultation.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve the implementation of 75mm high road humps A to G, Ruff Lane, Ormskirk, as set out in the report and at Appendices 'A' and 'B'.

Detail

As part of proposals for a cycle safety scheme, a series of road humps is proposed for Ruff Lane, Ormskirk, between Knowsley Road and Beech Meadow.

The proposed road humps are designed to reduce vehicle speeds and make the route more attractive to vulnerable road users, particularly cyclists. The proposals will act as a continuation of the improved cycle facilities to be provided as part of Ormskirk Eastern Gateway, linking the recently improved St Helens Road/Ruff Lane junction with the rear entrance to Edge Hill University. This will increase opportunities for journeys by sustainable transport on the eastern side of Ormskirk town centre.



Consultations

The road humps were advertised and consulted upon commencing 18 May 2022 for 4 weeks, the results and comments received are summarised below.

The local county councillor and the West Lancashire Borough Councillors for the electoral division concerned have been consulted and no objections have been raised. The Chief Operating Officer of West Lancashire Borough Council has also been consulted and raised no objection.

Lancashire Constabulary, Lancashire Fire and Rescue service and North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust were consulted and raised no objections.

Cycling UK and Sustrans were both consulted and raised no objections.

Five residents offered support for the proposals, citing issues such as reduced vehicle speeds and improved road safety for cyclists and pedestrians.

Five residents objected to the proposals. A summary of the issues raised is as follows:

- i. No cyclists use Ruff Lane and Edge Hill University does not encourage cyclists on its campus.

In response, the proposals are not solely for the benefit of existing cyclists. They form part of a wider package of cycle infrastructure improvements through the Ormskirk Eastern Gateway Project. The proposals will link with improvements already completed at the Ruff Lane/St Helens Road junction, along with work currently underway in Ormskirk town centre. Once complete this co-ordinated package of measures is designed to provide safe and effective routes for cycling on the east side of Ormskirk, thereby increasing journeys by sustainable transport.

Edge Hill University promotes sustainable travel, including the provision of bike lockers, cycle stands and racks on campus.

- ii. Cyclists don't like road humps.

In response, various types of traffic calming measures have been considered for Ruff Lane. Sinusoidal road humps are considered to achieve the best balance in terms of vehicle speed reduction, along with convenience and comfort for cyclists, given the existing highway layout.

- iii. Road humps will be a hindrance to residents and will cause damage to vehicles.

In response, the road humps are designed to national standards and are not considered to be a risk to vehicles. The proposed 75mm height is considered appropriate.



- iv. The numerous parking areas already impede the speed of traffic and this is not an area noted for road traffic accidents.

In response, whilst collision data for Ruff Lane does not indicate a significant history of collisions involving cyclists, most recent survey data shows 85th percentile vehicle speeds to be well in excess of the 20mph speed limit, with 31mph eastbound and 27 mph westbound. The proposed road humps are designed to reduce recorded speeds thereby improving the environment for cyclists.

- v. A safety camera would be preferable to road humps.

In response, whilst a safety camera would be likely to achieve a reduction in vehicle speeds at an isolated location, the series of road humps proposed are expected to achieve a reduction in speeds over a significant length of Ruff Lane thereby providing a wider benefit.

- vi. The proposed development breaches West Lancashire local plan and National Planning Policy Framework policies and guidance, particularly in respect of landscape character and visual amenity given the location within a conservation area. The road humps should be sett paved.

In response, the proposals are located within the Ruff Lane conservation area. However, the planning policy and guidance referred to is not applicable given that these proposals are within the existing highway and planning consent is therefore not required. The road humps would be constructed from bituminous materials, as per the existing carriageway surface. Whilst the warning signs normally needed in conjunction with road humps would detract from the visual amenity of the area, in this instance such signage is not required due to the 20mph zone status that can be implemented on Ruff Lane once the road humps are in place.

- vii. Road humps are a waste of money which could be better spent resurfacing the existing road which is in poor condition.

In response, the road surface is considered adequate. Funding for this cycle safety scheme cannot be transferred for use on resurfacing.

- viii. Double yellow lines should be provided instead of road humps to remove on street parking. This would prevent cars and cyclists having to wait behind stationary vehicles for oncoming traffic.

In response, additional no waiting at any time restrictions on Ruff Lane are likely to increase the speed of vehicles which is contrary to the improved environment for cycling that the scheme aims to achieve.

- ix. An extra road hump should be provided at the commencement of the 20mph speed limit east of Beech Meadow to assist with road safety at the Beech Meadow and Woodlands Close junctions, otherwise vehicles will accelerate once past the last road hump near Normanhurst (road hump "G").

In response, the proposed layout is consistent with that required for a 20 mph speed limit zone. An existing 20 mph roundel road marking at the change of speed limit



east of Beech Meadow is considered a traffic calming feature under the Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions 2016. The distance from this feature to proposed road hump "G" is less than the maximum 100 metres permitted within the Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions 2016 for a 20 mph speed limit zone.

- x. Pedestrians are already safe using the existing footways.

In response, there are existing footways along both sides of Ruff Lane in the area under consideration. Whilst the proposals are primarily designed for cycle safety, a reduction in vehicle speeds would also enhance the environment for pedestrians.

- xi. Since the COVID-19 pandemic there has been a fall in the amount of traffic using Ruff Lane. This area is noticeably quieter due to many Edge Hill students learning remotely and a large number of staff working from home.

In response, the proposals are not primarily concerned with reducing the volume of traffic, they are focussed on a reduction in vehicle speeds.

Having considered the responses it is advised that none are of such concern that the proposal should not be approved and it is proposed that the implementation of the scheme be approved.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Without provision of the proposed road humps, vehicle speeds on Ruff Lane will continue to exceed the 20mph limit. This is likely to act as a continuing deterrent to cycle journeys along Ruff Lane. This will compromise the overall effectiveness of the various cycle infrastructure improvements currently being implemented on the eastern side of Ormskirk town centre, particularly in relation to journeys to and from Edge Hill University.

Financial

The estimated cost of implementing the proposals detailed in this report is £70,000. Funding has been made available from the county council's 2022/23 cycle safety scheme programme.

Legal

The proposals detailed in this report would be implemented under The Highways Act 1980 in particular s90A-G and the Highways (Road Humps) Regulations 1999.



List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
-------	------	-------------

None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

