

## Report to the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation)

**Date: 30 August 2016**

**Subject: Westerton, Blackgates and Thorpe Primary Schools - 20mph zones – Objections to advertised Draft Traffic Regulation Order**

**Capital Scheme Numbers : 32150 and 32151**

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Ardsley and Robin Hood and Morley South		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:		
Appendix number:		

### Summary of main issues

- 1 Following approval of a report to the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) in December 2015, a Speed Limit Order was advertised on site which attracted two objections.
- 2 This report details the objections and asks the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) to consider and overrule the objections to Leeds City Council (Speed Limit) Order (No 2) 2016
- 3 Authorise the City Solicitor to notify the objectors of the outcome of the decision and to make and seal the Leeds City Council Speed Limit (No 2) Order 2016 as advertised.

### Recommendations

- 2 The Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) is requested to:
  - i) Consider and overrule the objections to Leeds City Council (Speed Limit) Order (No 2) 2016; and

- ii) Request the City Solicitor to make, seal and implement Leeds City Council (Speed Limit) Order (No 2) 2016 as advertised and inform the objectors accordingly of the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation's) decision.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To consider the objections received to Leeds City Council (Speed Limit) Order (No 2) 2016 relating to a proposed 20mph zone in West Ardsley and Thorpe and decide on whether to overrule or uphold the objections.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 Following approval of a report to the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) in August 2014, Leeds City Council (Speed Limit) Order (No 24) 2014 was advertised on site and this attracted one objection. This objection stated that flaws in the original approval process and subsequent advertisement could leave the scheme open to a legal challenge.
- 2.2 Following due consideration it was decided to abandon the scheme as previously advertised and seek approval and authority to advertise a scheme to introduce a 20mph speed limit in the area under a revised justification process.
- 2.3 The Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) approved a report on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2015 to advertise a draft Traffic Regulation Order for a 20mph speed limit in areas of West Ardsley, Tingley and Thorpe.
- 2.4 The draft Order was advertised from the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016 to the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016 and two objections were received. These objections are detailed on the attached table at section 7.

## **3 Main issues**

- 3.1 The Council initiated the development of a new programme for expanding the use of 20mph speed limits in 2010 with trial project focussing on the environs of schools. Subsequently this programme has been expanded and developed with the ultimate goal of the expanded provision of schemes in local neighbourhoods to incorporate areas around all schools within the setting of a lower speed limit. This approach was first approved by the Executive Board in June 2012, in response to a deputation requesting a 20 mph speed limit on Haven Chase in Cookridge, and subsequently endorsed by the Executive Board in February 2014 in response to a deputation from the 20s Plenty for Us campaign group.

More recently the former Scrutiny Board (Sustainable Economy and Culture) reviewed the programme and evidence in November 2014, noting, as schemes progress, the change in emphasis from a road casualty reduction programme to a more broad based approach which also gives emphasis to the broader benefits for on improved opportunities for walking, cycling and community cohesion. Endorsement was given in September 2015 to the continued delivery of this programme and the aim that the majority of residential streets within Leeds district

will have a 20mph speed limit by 2020, concentrated around schools and their local residential areas.

- 3.2 The boundaries for the 20mph schemes currently being progressed are designed to not only improve and maintain road safety in the immediate vicinity of the individual schools but also to give added benefit to the wider residential areas around these schools and hence improve the environment for cycling and walking on school journeys. National statistics show that around 25% of all child casualties happen on a school journey, but very few occur in the immediate vicinity of the school, emphasising the need to consider the whole of the journey to school when designing a 20 mph scheme. Whilst the schools are the "focal point" for the schemes, it is considered that the benefits on the wider community are also an important part of the overall principle.
- 3.3 It is anticipated that implementation of each individual scheme within the current phase of the wider programme will be complete within the 2016/2017 financial year.
- 3.4 It is also expected that the schools will benefit from the added incentive of a lower speed limit to make positive changes in the modal shift for the school journey, with parents being encouraged to allow children to walk or cycle to school. Fifty three percent of pupils at Blackgates Primary currently walk, cycle or scoot to school, around half the pupils walk to Westerton Primary. A comprehensive programme to support schools in enabling and promoting active travel and road safety for pupils is in place. A school Crossing Patrol Warden has previously highlighted the issue of speeding on Sykes Lane, and the issue of speeding and 20 mph limit as a solution, are identified in both the schools Travel Plans. Specific concerns over the impact of busy traffic have been identified on Hesketh lane, Rein Road, Westerton Road and Lowry Road by parents as barriers to walking and cycling.
- 3.5 The impacts of the aforementioned 20 mph limit project will be monitored as part of the wider road casualty reduction programme. The modal shift of the school journey will be monitored via the School Travel Plans and additional surveys where required.
- 3.6 Approval to this particular scheme was given in the December 2015 report to Highways Board under the "improved opportunities for walking, cycling and community cohesion" rationale.
- 3.7 **Design Proposals and Full Scheme Description.**
  - 3.7.1 It is proposed to introduce a 20mph speed limit on residential streets in Tingley, Thorpe and West Ardsley as shown on drawing numbers TMW-3-2-604-5 and TMW-3-2-605-4a.
  - 3.7.2 Terminal signs will be erected at all entrances to the zones
  - 3.7.3 Traffic calming is proposed on streets where the average recorded speeds were above 24mph

- 3.7.4 As part of the works to increase safety outside the schools, it is proposed to formalise the existing school keep clear markings outside Westerton and Blackgates Primary School. The times of the restriction will be 8am – 6pm Monday – Friday inclusive.
- 3.7.5 Following a request by a bus operator at a meeting of the Leeds Bus Partnership Group, a school time waiting restriction will be introduced on one side of Westerton Road near the school to assist in the free flow of traffic especially public service vehicles.

### **3.8 Programme**

- 3.8.1 It is anticipated that the proposal will be implemented within the 2016/ 2017 financial year.

## **3 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.1 Ward Members: Ward Members for Ardsley & Robin Hood and Morley South were consulted on the original proposals by email dated 4 April 2014. 3 members (2 Ardsley & Robin Hood, 1 Morley South) expressed support for the scheme. They also requested the inclusion of additional streets and recommended using speed cushions. These requests have been incorporated into the scheme. The 3 remaining ward members have made no negative comments. The re-advertising of the schemes presented the opportunity to incorporate an additional area in Thorpe (Ardsley & Robin Hood ward) and so these members were re-consulted on this aspect by email on 20 November 2015.
- 4.1.2 Emergency Services and Metro were consulted by letter and email dated 8 July 2014. No adverse comments were received. They were also re-consulted due to the Thorpe addition on 20 November 2015.
- 4.1.3 The general public were consulted via notices on street lighting columns during the public advertisement phase, along with an advert in the Yorkshire Post newspaper between the dates 24<sup>th</sup> February 2016 to the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016.

### **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

- 4.2.1 A full Equality, Diversity / Cohesion and Integration impact assessment has been carried out for 20mph schools schemes and is attached as Appendix 1.
- 4.2.2 Positive Impact: Making 20mph the normal speed limit would:
- Provide safer passage whilst crossing the road to all pedestrians, especially those with mobility issues, disabled people, parents supporting pushchairs and young and old people
  - Greater independence and choice for children travelling to school
  - Dramatically increases chances of survival if hit by a car to 97%
  - Make it more pleasant to walk or cycle, encouraging a more healthy lifestyle

- Reduce noise pollution.
- Improve quality of life for the local community

#### 4.2.3 Negative Impact: Making 20mph the normal speed limit would:

- Have the potential to provide a slight increase in vehicle emissions due to lower speeds. It is expected there will be a reduction of between 1- 2mph for the average speeds across the zone and that the potential air quality implications will be negligible and offset due to more uniform driving behaviour and potential increased modal shift to more sustainable travel choices.

### 4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The proposals contained in the report have no implications for the council constitution.

4.3.2 By providing a safer road environment where needed and justified, the ongoing 20mph zone programme is helping to achieve Leeds' Best City ambition by reducing the number of pedestrians killed or seriously injured on the city's roads, by fostering links between the communities and local facilities, especially where the highway forms a considerable barrier, and by enabling more sustainable travel choices for local journeys, including for new developments within the city.

4.3.3 Environmental Policy: The reduction in speed limit to 20mph will not have any significant impact on carbon emissions, air pollutants should remain similar to that of 30mph.

4.3.4 Local Transport Plan 3: **Strategic Approaches:**  
**Travel Choices:** P10. Promote the benefits of active travel.  
**Connectivity:** P18. Improve safety and security  
P22. Develop networks and facilities to encourage cycling and walking.

4.3.5 Transport Policy Approval: The design instruction for this scheme was received in April 2014 and the proposed scheme is approved in principle by Transport Policy.

### 4.4 Resources and Value for Money

4.4.1 The estimated combined cost to implement this scheme is £26,000, which comprises of £18,000 works costs, £6,000 Staff fees and £2,000 legal fees, all to be funded from the LTP Transport Policy Capital Programme.

4.4.2 It is provisionally estimated that this project could achieve a 10% reduction in casualties with a financial return of 100% over the first year on funds expended. This is comparable with the present average for the 20 mph Zones.

### 4.5 Capital Funding and Cash Flow

4.5.1 The approval for expenditure of £26,000, which comprises of £18,000 works costs, £6,000 Staff fees and £2,000 legal fees, was included in a previous report.

**Parent Scheme Number:** 99609

**Title:** LTP Transport Policy Capital Programme

4.5.2 There should be no additional revenue costs as a result of this capital scheme.

#### 4.6 **Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.6.1 The scheme is in the Annual Programme and subject to resolving the objections received; it is anticipated to be completed within the 2016/2017 financial year.

#### 4.7 **Risk Management**

4.7.1 If no action was taken then access to the schools for pedestrians and cyclists will not improve and the potential of injury to pedestrians and cyclists will not be addressed.

### 5 **Conclusions**

5.1 The provision of this 20mph scheme will contribute to the Council's ambition by improving the safety and quality of life of Leeds residents by enabling safer pedestrian and cycling journeys in local communities. It will also provide a safer environment around the school and residential areas thus encouraging more sustainable travel behaviours for all users.

### 6 **Recommendations**

6.1 The Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) is requested to:

- i) Consider and overrule the objections to the Leeds City Council (Speed Limit) Order (No 2) 2016; and
- ii) request the City Solicitor to make, seal and implement Leeds City Council (Speed Limit) Order (No 2) 2016 as advertised and inform the objectors accordingly of the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation's) decision.

### 7 **Background Papers<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 None.

---

<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.

## 8 List of Objections to the Leeds City Council (Speed Limit) Order (No 2) 2016 and Officer Comments <sup>2</sup>

### Details of Objections

#### 8.1 First objection (relating to Blackgates & Westerton)

The objector believes that the process for approving individual 20mph schemes across the city remains flawed and that the rationale for introducing 20mph speed limits does not have the appropriate approvals merely an endorsement from Scrutiny Board which has no Executive function. Further he believes that the provisions of Circular Roads 1/2013 are not correctly applied to this scheme.

The specific points are:

- The current scheme is the same as the previous (abandoned) one yet there has been no re-analysis of the boundaries and requirements. He states that the council is blatantly re-promoting its original proposal without evidence to support it.
- There is no approval to the change of rationale in promoting 20mph schemes merely a mention in a Scrutiny Board Report of the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2015. As there is no Executive function to Scrutiny Boards it is stated that the Chief Officer is therefore acting outside his authority.
- As there were no background papers to the scheme approval reports, the Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation) has not had the appropriate information presented to him to be able to make the decision to approve the schemes and authorise advertising of the TROs. There being no site specific justification within the report.
- The Highways Authority has not followed the guidance of the Department for Transport Circular 1/2013 (Setting Local Speed Limits) in that:
  - a) a full range of speed reduction measures should always be considered before any new speed limit is introduced; and

b) there are roads within the boundary that do not conform to a category which the Department for Transport suggests would be suitable for a 20mph restriction as their primary function is the movement of traffic in general and in particular, through traffic. I.e. they are District Distributor Roads.

- Morley Wards Members were not consulted before the scheme was re-advertised nor were Morley Town Council despite the area now being within their boundary.

## 8.2 Officers Response

An Executive Board report (14<sup>th</sup> February 2014) from the Director of City Development and the Director of Public Health, - prepared in response to a deputation from the 20s' Plenty campaigns group - asks the Board members to 'Endorse the continuation of the targeted approach to the progressive roll out of 20 mph speed limits in the city with a view to extending the opportunity to all residential areas as resources permit'. The report outlined the accident reduction approach but also explained that as these accidents became more dispersed the evaluation criteria was likely to include other aspects.

The approach was further endorsed by the Scrutiny Board in March 2015 which made specific mention of the benefits now being more focussed on improved opportunities for walking, cycling and improved community cohesion.

Consequently, based on this approach, there is a proposed area of a 20 mph speed limit centred on virtually every school in Leeds, with the delivery of schemes originally prioritised on the basis of their casualty reduction potential. The area around Blackgates and Westerton Primary schools was prioritised as its casualty per km<sup>2</sup> ratio still exceeds that of other areas outside Leeds schools that currently do not have a 20 mph speed limit. Post -2012 20mph schemes have attempted, as much as possible, to encompass whole catchment areas rather than concentrate on a small area outside of the school gate.

These papers, it is felt, have detailed and ratified the approach to the incremental roll out of 20mph speed limits around schools and the wider residential areas and thus enable the Chief Officer to make appropriate delegated decisions at Highways Board.

On the specific points:

- Whilst the general rationale has changed from broadly accident reduction to being more focussed on improved opportunities for walking, cycling and improved community cohesion, the principle of schools being the focus and then encompassing the wider residential area still remains relevant and so the boundaries for the scheme has not changed.
- The approvals to the principle to the rationale have been documented in the Executive Board and Scrutiny Board

Reports mentioned.

- No background papers were required as the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) is fully conversant with the detail of the reports/papers etc...
- Section 1 of DfT Circular 1/2013, states that 'Traffic authorities are asked to keep their speed limits under review with changing circumstances, and to consider the introduction of more 20 mph limits and zones, over time, in urban areas and built-up village streets that are primarily residential, to ensure greater safety for pedestrians and cyclists', the objectives:
  - achieving local speed limits that better reflect the needs of all road users, not just motorised vehicles;
  - ensuring improved quality of life for local communities and a better balance between road safety, accessibility and environmental objectives,

Paragraph 77 of the DfT Circular 1/2013 specifically recommends that traffic authorities should consider a 20 mph speed limit on residential streets and other town and city streets with high pedestrian and cyclist movement, while paragraph 78 acknowledges that 'main traffic routes have a mixture of functions, including traffic, commercial and residential', but leaves the decision as to what the primary function of a given road is to the local traffic authority. Section 84 makes it explicit that traffic authorities have the powers to introduce 20mph speed limits on major streets where there either are, or could be, significant numbers of journeys on foot/ by bicycle and that this is in addition to 'Residential streets in cities, towns and villages, particularly where the streets are being used by people on foot and on bicycles, there is community support and the characteristics of the street are suitable' and paragraph 97 states that 'the implementation of 20 mph limits over a larger number of roads should be considered where mean speeds at or below 24 mph are already achieved over a number of roads.

The DfT Circular quotes the evidence of the effectiveness of the 20 mph speed limits in terms of road safety, encouraging and enabling sustainable modes and environmental benefits, which was in turn cited in the report to the Chief Highways Officer, along with evidence from national and local case studies.

LCC consider that the roads referred to as district distributor roads (Syke Road, Baghill Road, Westerton Road, Lowry Road & Constable Road are primarily residential in status and, in fact, suffer from a "rat running" issue that the 20mph speed limit would serve to deter. Further Lowry Road; in the last five years had 5 accidents, involving 1 adult and 1 child cyclist and a young adult pedestrian; Constable Road had a child cyclist casualty and two loss of control accidents where vehicles failed to negotiate bends and struck roadside objects (indicating excessive speeds), Hesketh Lane saw an accident involving a cyclist and Syke Road 1 accident involving a child pedestrian and another involving a

cyclist (3 in total). In the last five years there were 14 accidents altogether, including a KSI (serious injury to cyclist).

It is felt that the Westerton and Blackgates 20 mph scheme complies with the DfT's guidance on 20 mph speed limits in that: The speeds on the majority of the roads within the scheme are already at or below 24mph; All the streets included are primarily residential; The area encompasses 2 primary schools, recreational areas, green spaces, playgrounds, local facilities and connecting footpaths. Appropriate traffic calming is proposed on those roads where speed currently recorded are exceeding 24mph, this conforming to the DfT's recommendation that a full range of speed reduction measures should always be considered before any new speed limit is introduced.

- Morley Town Council was not originally consulted as their boundary did not previously include this area. Once this boundary change was identified they were contacted and had no objections to the proposal.

### 8.3 Second objection (referring to the Meadow Side Road Estate)

The objector believes that it is not necessary to have a 20mph speed limit within the Meadowside Estate and that the proposals are only being introduced on the behalf of local campaigners. The main points to this objection are:

- To their knowledge there have been no speeding convictions and no traffic collisions.
- Parking in the Meadow Side Road estate makes speeding difficult.
- Additional signing would be a waste of money and is unlikely to make a difference to the speed of vehicles.
- The existing traffic calming in East Ardsley is a hazard leading to dangerous driving and one recent accident. It has no impact on vehicle speeds.
- A 20mph speed limit would create a false sense of security for the parents of children who already play in the streets.

#### 8.4 Officer Comment

The proposed zone is part of a wider package of measures being rolled out across the city to introduce 20mph speed limits in residential areas as described earlier in this report and the Meadowside Estate is included as it is within the boundaries of the extended Thorpe 20mph scheme. Not only is it appropriate that this be included, omitting this estate would create an anomaly within the wider residential area as the signing would signify an increase in speed limit as the estate was entered.

As the estate has been constructed with home zone characteristics there is an existing system of traffic calming features provided. In addition the parking that takes place also reduces speeds. Consequently there is little additional work to undertake to implement the 20mph limit – some repeater signs only. If the estate were omitted then larger, terminal signs would be required at the Fall Lane junction, probably at greater cost.

There is no evidence to support that claim that the existing traffic calming is dangerous and was the cause of an accident in East Ardsley. The only recorded injury accident that we are aware of occurring away from any traffic calming features. Post implementation speed surveys have yet to be completed in the East Ardsley Zone.

20mph speeds limits and zones create a positive sense of security in order to encourage cycling and walking and are appropriate in residential areas.