

Item No.

REPORT TO THE HEAD OF HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

March 2019

OBJECTION TO PROPOSED ROAD SAFETY MEASURES ASSOCIATED WITH GOWER SAFE ROUTES IN COMMUNITIES 2018~19 PROPOSED TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS, SPEED PLATEAUX AND 20MPH LIMIT IN UPPER KILLAY, SWANSEA.

Summary

Purpose:	This report refers to twenty letters of objection received in respect to proposals to introduce a series of measures in the Upper Killay area through the Safe Routes in Communities initiative. These are aimed at improving road safety and promoting walking and cycling in the area.
Reason for Decision:	To consider the objection and to determine how to proceed.
Consultation:	Local Ward Members, Legal & Democratic Services.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the objections are noted• the traffic regulation orders are implemented as advertised• once all works are completed that the effectiveness of the speed limit and operation of the speed plateaux in Upper Killay are monitored• that the objectors are informed of the decision

1.0 Background:

1.1 As part of the Safe Routes in Communities initiative it has been proposed to introduce a series of measures in the Upper Killay area aimed at improving road safety with the key aim of promoting walking and cycling in the area.

1.2 A key objective of the proposals is to moderate traffic flows on the roads immediately surrounding the area, but particularly Gower Road where the road layout combined with extended forward visibility are ineffective in moderating vehicle speeds. To help achieve this it is proposed to implement a series of 3 flexibly constructed speed plateaux on Gower Road from the existing gateway signs from Fairwood Common to the junction of Hen Parc Lane, Upper Killay. Not only will this help in

moderating traffic flow on Gower Road during the day, the introduction of the speed plateaux will also create the opportunity to introduce uncontrolled pedestrian crossings which provide a safer means of crossing the busy Gower Road where no such facility is currently available. To further support this aim it is also proposed to introduce a 20mph limit on Summerland Park and adjoining streets. This will further help in moderating vehicle speeds in the area.

- 1.3 The final element of the proposals is the introduction of parking restrictions at key locations in the community. The restrictions proposed in Fairwood Lane are targeted at the improvement of sightlines for pedestrians along Fairwood Lane and at junctions.

2.0 Details of the objections and responses thereafter

- 2.1 The Council has received twenty letters of objection to the proposals.
- 2.2 Eleven residents objected on the grounds that the proposed measures would likely cause damage to vehicles.
- 2.3 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.2 – The proposed speed plateaux construction incorporates a 75mm rise in level from the carriageway surface to the top of the entry/exit ramp over a 1.5m distance. This equates to a ramp gradient of 1 in 20. It was felt that this approach/exit gradient was more appropriate for use on this section of Gower Road (as opposed to the more severe 1 in 12 gradient offered by other speed reducing features) whilst still sufficiently moderating vehicle speeds. The TRL have researched this issue, the resulting report from the study, TRL Report 614 (Kennedy et al., 2004) concluded that vehicles travelling over road humps at appropriate speeds should not suffer damage, provided the humps conform to the Highways (Road Hump) Regulations 1999.*
- 2.4 Nineteen residents objected on the grounds that the proposed measures would increase air and noise pollution to unacceptable levels.
- 2.5 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.4 - it should be noted that, rather than causing a detriment, the presence of a speed cushions can result in a substantial drop in traffic noise levels. The Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) carried out research in 1996 entitled "Traffic Calming: Traffic and Vehicle noise. This research involved measuring a variety of heavily trafficked routes where road humps and several types of speed cushions were installed. These studies were followed up by a controlled trial on the TRL test track at Crowthorne. The research showed that after the installation of road humps and speed cushions, the maximum noise levels from light vehicles (cars and small vans) are reduced. So too is the overall traffic noise level when light vehicles form most of the traffic stream. However, the effect of road humps and speed cushions on noise from large vehicles is not as conclusive. There are some decreases in*

maximum vehicle noise levels from large commercial vehicles due to reductions in their speeds but this can be offset by increases in noise from the bodywork including empty trailers as they pass over the humps or cushions. The net effect of these vertical deflection measures on overall traffic noise therefore depends on the proportion of large commercial vehicles in the traffic stream and on the type of road hump installed. Since the traffic composition for the affected roads in the Upper Killay area is predominantly light vehicles travelling over speed plateaux then this should result in a decrease in overall traffic noise as well as individual vehicle noise.

The TRL also carried out research in 1996 entitled “Road Humps and GroundBorne Vibrations”. This research involved measuring vibrations created from a variety of vehicles, including laden and unladen Heavy Goods Vehicles, traversing a selection of road humps on various soil types. The values measured were compared against British Standard 7385: Part 2 which provides threshold values of vibration exposure which may give rise to minor cosmetic damage to buildings. The threshold relates to very minor damage such as the formation of hairline cracks on plaster finishes or in mortar joints and the spread of existing cracks. This research concluded that even very minor hairline cracking should not occur unless road humps are constructed less than four metres from a dwelling on the softest soil. Further supporting evidence can be found in a scrutiny report on the impact of speed humps in London. This work was carried out in 2004 and showed that a road hump would need to be less than one metre from a property on London clay soil to cause minor building damage. As all properties are more than 3 metres from the nearest traffic calming feature it is not anticipated that this will be a future issue.

In relation to air pollution, the designed traffic calming measures are targeted at moderating vehicle speeds. Being significantly less severe than speed humps it is not anticipated that the measures will engender the acceleration/deceleration patterns associated with increased levels of emission. It should also be noted that traffic volumes in the area are much lower than city centre distributor routes where emission levels are at a higher level.

- 2.6 Eighteen residents objected on the grounds that the proposed measures would a negative effect on emergency services.
- 2.7 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.6 – As part of the statutory consultation process, we invite input from all emergency services. We received no objection or comment from the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust on these proposals.*
- 2.8 Seven residents objected on the grounds that proposals would be more effective in the form of a speed camera.

- 2.9 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.8 – Whilst developing appropriate speed moderating proposals for this scheme, the provision of a speed camera was investigated. Unfortunately, in this instance, the scheme did not meet the criteria within which we can consider installing a speed camera at this location. We will readdress this should the criteria for consideration change, or is met in the future.*
- 2.10 Two residents objected on the grounds that the proposed measures would be more effective in the form of a light controlled crossing.
- 2.11 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.10 – Installing a light controlled crossing in this area is seen as part of a long term aspiration to address local community concerns and will be considered in future when a funding stream is identified.*
- 2.12 Four residents objected on the grounds that the proposed measures would not combat the inconsiderate vehicle parking at peak times.
- 2.13 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.12 –The parking measures proposed are designed to address road safety concerns on Fairwood Lane. The impact of the scheme on local parking practices will be reviewed following the implementation of the scheme.*
- 2.14 Fifteen residents objected on the grounds that the proposed measures were a waste of taxpayer funds.
- 2.15 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.14 –The measures have been developed in response to local concerns expressed over the speed and volume of traffic using both Gower Road and the Summerland Park Estate. The measures have also been developed to help improve pedestrian access through the village in line with Welsh Governments Active Travel ambitions.*
- 2.16 Three residents objected on the grounds that the proposed measures would have a negative effect on Tourism and an area of outstanding natural beauty.
- 2.17 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.16 –The measures themselves are not constructed within the AONB. Notwithstanding, the measures themselves are constructed in the same material as the existing carriageway and lining and signing associated with the measures is relatively minor.*
- 2.18 Six residents objected on the grounds that there was no discernible speeding issue.
- 2.19 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.18 – As part of the Council's on-going monitoring and management of vehicular traffic in the City and County of Swansea, we have access to traffic data from permanent automatic traffic counters and localised ah-hoc speed surveys. The results indicate the 85th percentile speeds along this section of Gower*

Road are in excess of 30mph. This indicates that 85% of vehicles are travelling in excess of the posted speed limit with off-peak vehicle speeds considerably higher.

- 2.20 Three residents objected on the grounds that the proposed measures would make pedestrians & drivers' complacent leading to an increase in accidents.
- 2.21 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.20 – Officers are not aware of any research which would support this viewpoint. However the measures introduced on the main thoroughfare of Gower Road are designed to moderate the behaviour of drivers travelling at excessive speeds. The ambition is not to significantly reduce local speeds but to deter excessive speed from inconsiderate drivers.*
- 2.22 Nine residents objected on the grounds that the proposed measures were unlikely to have the desired effect and that alternative measures should be explored first.
- 2.23 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.22 – As part of the design process, all available options are considered. Each option is evaluated on its merit and appropriateness considering the objectives of the scheme and current local government policy. Speed plateaux were considered to be the most appropriate method of moderating vehicle speeds whilst ensuring the proposed measures are sympathetic to the community.*
- 2.24 Four residents objected on the grounds that the proposed measures would shift any parking issues elsewhere and create a further issue in the village.
- 2.25 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.24 – Whilst the council accepts in areas where parking is proposed to be restricted, some migration will occur. The aim of the proposals is to regulate parking at key locations. The council will continue to monitor the effects of the proposals after implementation.*

3.0 General comments

- 3.1 The scheme as described has the target of promoting the growth in walking, cycling and other forms of sustainable transport by providing an environment where the community feel it is safe to consider alternatives to the car. By targeting children it is aimed at changing culture and helping to promote a healthier lifestyle and also opening the community to them by creating a significantly safer environment where walking or cycling are seen as the normal way of travelling to school.
- 3.2 The Council are taking a dual approach to by moderating vehicle speeds along Gower Road and simultaneously lowering the speed limits on the adjacent estate roads. The aims of the scheme are tied to the Welsh Government's aspirations as set out in the Active Travel Act.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 Of the remaining twenty objections, some objectors expressed concern over the reduction in the speed limit and the justification for it. As the basis for the scheme is predominantly related to promoting a safer environment for walking and cycling, within the local community, it is felt that the managing speed on Gower Road together with lowering of the speed limit in one of the primary residential areas is fundamental in engendering the environment to encourage these sustainable forms of transport.
- 4.2 The main objection was to the impact that the plateaux would have on the environment, their impact on vehicles and the cost of maintaining them. Studies undertaken by the Transport Research Laboratory have addressed these issues and have shown that there is no evidence to support that there is a danger of increased noise, damage to properties or vehicles themselves as long as the traffic calming is built to prescribed standards. With regard to the increased maintenance costs, it is recognised that the scheme may attract additional costs however these are regarded as being nominal.

5.0 Legal Implication:

- 5.1 The Traffic Regulation Order has been proposed in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 which require that Notice of the proposals is advertised in a newspaper circulating in the area. Before a Traffic Regulation Order can be made it is necessary to consider all objections. Where objections have been made the Council must be satisfied that it is appropriate to make the order, having considered the objections.

6.0 Recommendation:

- 6.1 It is recommended that;
- the objections are noted
 - the traffic regulation orders are implemented as advertised
 - once all works are completed that the speed limit and operation of the proposed speed plateaux in Upper Killay are monitored
 - that the objectors are informed of the decision

7.0 Background Papers:

- 7.1 Twenty letters of objection were used in the preparation of this report.

Contact Officer:
Mark Thomas, Group Leader for Traffic Management

☎ 01792 636233

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