

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE**

20 October 2015

Report of the Strategic Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

**PETITION REQUESTING THE REMOVAL OF A SPEED HUMP, STATION
ROAD, ECKINGTON**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To inform the Cabinet Member of investigations carried out following the receipt of a petition requesting the removal of a speed hump outside 57 Station Road, Eckington.

(2) **Information and Analysis**

Background

Receipt of the petition was acknowledged by the Cabinet Member on 5 May 2015 (Minute No. 55/15 refers). The petition contains 55 signatures and reads as follows:

***“PETITION TO HAVE SPEED HUMP REMOVED FROM OUTSIDE
PROPERTY OF 57 STATION ROAD, ECKINGTON, SHEFFIELD S21 4FW***

Please sign below if you agree that this Speed Hump should be removed because it has no effect in reducing the speed of traffic and causes disturbance, noise, damage, pollution and vibrations.”

The petition is accompanied by a covering letter which outlines the reasons for this request, along with some additional comments from fellow residents of the street. In summary, the petition is specifically requesting the removal of one road hump only (the one outside No 57 Station Road) but the comments that have been included allude to the whole scheme being removed. A suggestion has also been made about blocking the road off completely.

Site Details

Station Road is a town centre street which forms part of a link through the centre with Market Street and High Street. Historically, this route through the town has been used as a rat run to avoid the traffic light crossroads on the A6135, particularly at peak times when queues can develop. The scheme of road humps was installed in December 2001 to address local concerns regarding this issue in a bid to deter this practice and regulate the speeds of those that do use the road. Full consultation was carried out prior to their

installation. Station Road is covered by a weight restriction which prohibits the use of the road as a through route by HGV traffic, although it is part of a bus route.

In terms of collision statistics, there had been two recorded injury collisions on Station Road itself in the ten years prior to the scheme being implemented in December 2001. There has been one recorded injury collision since that time. However, more significantly, at the Station Road/Littlemoor junction, using the same time periods, there had been six injury collisions prior to the scheme being implemented and three since. Looking at the wider area, there were eight injury collisions on Market Street/High Street prior to the scheme, including a fatality, and four since, and there had been three injury collisions at the Pinfold Street/High Street junction before the scheme and one since. This demonstrates that the injury collision rate has more than halved along the route and at the junctions at both ends since the road humps were installed.

Officer Comments

The residents of 57 Station Road have commissioned an independent structural survey to ascertain the cause of cracks, etc, within the property. This was undertaken by a company called Byrom Clark Roberts and the resultant report did not attribute any defects in the property solely to ground borne vibrations from the road hump.

All features within the public highway are installed and constructed in accordance with national guidance and regulations. The road humps that are in place on Station Road are “bus friendly” plateau. These are essentially elongated flat top humps which enable both axles of a bus to mount the hump before coming off it at the other side. This minimises discomfort for bus passengers.

The Department for Transport (DfT) has published Traffic Advisory Leaflets on the subject of ground borne vibrations associated with road humps (leaflets 08/96 and 10/00). The DfT guidance sets out a table of minimum distances a property would need to be from a road hump to avoid vibration exposure. Even with a worst case scenario, 57 Station Road would not fall within the distances stated to be subject to damage from such ground borne vibration. As parking takes place on the same side of the road as the property 57 Station Road, traffic is generally further from the kerbside, reducing the probability of ground borne vibration reaching the properties.

Siting road humps is always a balance between avoiding vehicular accesses, side roads, etc, whilst still maintaining an appropriate distance between each hump to achieve the desired traffic calming effect. It would not be an option to remove this hump in isolation as this would leave too much of a gap in between the humps on either side. The siting of traffic calming measures is crucial to achieving an effective speed reducing scheme. Features placed too far apart can give rise to the harsh accelerating/decelerating in between each feature, increasing the “between hump” speed along with other environmental

knock-on effects, eg, noise and emissions. The Department for Transport guidance on road hump spacing states: "*The maximum spacing between road humps will influence the mean "between hump" speeds and spacing in excess of 100m may increase the "between hump" speeds significantly.*" The removal of the road hump outside 57 Station Road would increase the distance between the road humps either side to approximately 130m. This would undoubtedly increase the "between hump" speed on this road which would reduce the effectiveness of this traffic calming scheme.

Obviously, removing the scheme altogether would open the route up for through traffic to use unimpeded with no physical deterrent to the use of inappropriate speed. Following extensive research, road humps are the most effective speed reducing physical measure available for use on the public highway (as documented by the Transport Research Laboratory).

Closing the road off completely would displace any through traffic onto other routes in the town. Whilst some may remain on the main roads where desired, it is inevitable that some will use other, arguably less suitable routes. For instance, there are already allegations of traffic using Henry Street/John Street/Gosber Street/Gosber Road/Southgate/Staveley Lane, in both directions, as a route through town and this would undoubtedly increase if Station Road were not available for use. Also, not being able to use Station Road would adversely affect bus routes, times, etc.

It is therefore recommended that the speed plateau outside 57 Station Road remains in situ and that the request to close the road is turned down.

Local Member Comment

Following the receipt of the petition, Derbyshire County Council has consulted Eckington Parish Council, on behalf of the town as a whole. Clearly, if the scheme were to be removed, this could increase traffic numbers through the town centre and the Parish Council has already raised concerns with the Authority about the safety of pedestrians crossing in the town centre.

A response has been received from County Councillor Brian Ridgway, who is also a member of the Parish Council, which reads as follows:

"The parish council is supportive of the economic regeneration of Eckington town centre and sees access to the available free parking in the central areas as essential. To achieve an environment where the public will feel safe, traffic does have to be controlled. The removal of any highway feature which seeks to restrain the speed or movement of traffic as it approaches Eckington town centre, may increase the risk levels to pedestrians. Conversely, the stopping up of any access to the centre could see traffic displaced, so converging on alternative of points of access causing congestion. This could heighten the possibility traffic/pedestrian incidents. The parish council takes its duty of care to its parishioners very seriously, so could not condone such actions.

Recent surfacing on Station Road has been welcomed by local residents and road users alike.

The County has indicated that further work on Station Road is planned for 2016 and the parish council welcomes any improvements to the highways within their boundary."

(3) **Financial Considerations** There are no financial considerations associated with this report.

Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors have been considered: legal, prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

(4) **Key Decision** No.

(5) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(6) **Background Papers** Correspondence held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Steve Alcock, extension 38176.

(7) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That:

7.1 The road hump outside 57 Station Road, Eckington and the road hump scheme, as a whole, remains in place

7.2 Station Road is not closed to traffic.

7.3 The local Member and petitioners be informed accordingly.

Mike Ashworth
Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment