

July 2008	
Report to Head of Strategic Planning and Delivery	
Branksome Avenue – Area Traffic Calming	
Report prepared by: Senior Traffic Engineer - Julie Nelder	
Purpose: To consider traffic calming measures following public consultation.	
Wards affected: Homesteads	Key decision: No

1. RECOMMENDATION:

- 1.1 That the vehicle activated signs and improved road markings are implemented for the reasons set out in paragraph 4.5 of this report and site monitoring is carried out for a period of 3 months. It is further recommended to incorporate the additional measures as detailed in the 'Members Consultation' section below.

2. INTRODUCTION:

- 2.1. A consultation has recently been carried out among all residents fronting Branksome Avenue and Dunstable Road and in First Avenue (between Dunstable Road and Branksome Avenue). The same consultation documents were also provided to Essex Police.
- 2.2 Option 1 consisted of Vehicle Activated Signs and 'Slow' markings to enhance the existing road markings.
- 2.3 Option 2 consisted of Vehicle Activated Signs, centre hatching along the length of the routes and 4 mini roundabouts in total. (It should be noted that the feasibility of implementing a mini roundabout at Aldria Road is subject to further site investigations being carried out).

3. BACKGROUND:

- 3.1 A request was raised with Cllr Ojetola by Cllr MacPherson in November 2007 for traffic calming measures to be implemented along Branksome Avenue and Dunstable Road, Stanford-le-Hope. Instruction was given by Cllr Ojetola to commence with consultation as soon as possible.

- 3.2 The above roads have been included within the Integrated Transport Programme for 2008/09 under Area Traffic Calming. A total of £96,000 has been allocated to the project.
- 3.3 Within the last 3 years, one personal injury accident occurred in Branksome Avenue at its junction with First Avenue and three occurred in Dunstable Road (two of which were at the junction with Boyce Road).
- 3.4 A consultation letter was sent out to all residents fronting Branksome Avenue (237 properties), Dunstable Road (27 properties) and First Avenue, between Dunstable Road and Branksome Avenue (20 properties). Corner houses and/or the first few properties of each side road were also consulted.
- 3.5 The consultation was limited to those properties fronting the areas of the proposed measure in order that fair representation of residents' views could be made and so that no measures were imposed upon residents by those that would not be directly affected.
- 3.6 The results/returns of the consultation were as follows;
 - Branksome Avenue – 134 responses received (237 delivered)
 - Dunstable Road – 23 responses received (27 delivered)
 - First Avenue – 9 responses received (20 delivered)
- 3.7 In total 317 consultation letters were delivered with a total of 186 being returned. This gives a 59% return rate.
- 3.7 From the responses received from each of the 3 main roads consulted, there is a majority in favour of Option 2 (vehicle activated signs, centre hatching and mini roundabouts) being carried forward for implementation.

4. ISSUES AND/OR OPTIONS:

- 4.1 During the consultation period, Cllr Tolson requested that a physical measure is incorporated into Dunstable Road, between Colman Close and Parry Close. The possibility of providing a traffic island has been investigated but there is insufficient road width. However, a Vehicle Activated Sign and road markings are proposed at that location.
- 4.2 The estimated cost of implementing options 1 and 2 is £45,425 and £205,000 respectively.
- 4.3 Speed surveys were carried out in February in Branksome Avenue (one by Pugh Place and one by Fourth Avenue) and Dunstable Road. The highest speed at which 85% of vehicles were travelling up to in Branksome Avenue by Pugh Place is 34mph and by Fourth Avenue, 37mph. In Dunstable Road 85% of vehicles were travelling at speeds of up to 34mph.

- 4.4 Vehicle Activated Signs alone are reported to reduce vehicle speeds by an average of 2mph. When implemented with other measures, i.e, road markings, the reduction in speed should be greater. This would bring speeds closer to the posted speed limit of 30mph.
- 4.5 In view of the fact there have been no personal injury accidents along the length of Branksome Avenue and the additional funding that would be required to implement the mini roundabouts, it would be advisable to implement the vehicle activated signs and improved road markings first, then monitor vehicle speeds to ascertain what level of speed reduction has been achieved.

5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE PRIORITIES:

- 5.1. These actions accord with the Council priorities to create a safer environment.

RELEVANT POLICIES	
None	
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS	
The works would be funded from the 08/09 Area Traffic Calming budget.	
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS	
None	
OTHER IMPLICATIONS	
- None	
BACKGROUND PAPERS	Contact: Les Burns Telephone: 01375 413842 E-mail: lburns@thurrock.gov.uk
- Informal Consultation Document - Proposed Options	

Member Consultation

Ward Members have been consulted and a response was received from Cllr Tolson, who had received notification from the Portfolio Holder that he was unlikely to support recommendations that exceed the budget allocated.

A site meeting took place between the Senior Traffic Engineer and Cllr Tolson and it was agreed that due to visibility problems at some junctions, junction protection markings should be proposed for all the side road junctions with Branksome Avenue, subject to the statutory consultation.

It has been requested that the Vehicle Activated Sign proposed for the junction with Leonard Mews should be relocated to the vicinity of Painswick Avenue.

A further request was that the centre hatching that was proposed in Option 2 is incorporated within the works implemented.

Concern was also raised about the speed of traffic approaching the Boyce Road junction on Dunstable Road from the roundabout. This junction is just after a bend and it is reported that there have been several near misses. An investigation was carried out into the trials of a new road surface which is designed to reduce vehicle speeds. Unfortunately the location proposed for the road surface in this instance is too close to the properties and is not therefore recommended. It is therefore recommended that a static bend/junction ahead sign is placed on Dunstable Road prior to Boyce Road with an adjacent 'SLOW' marking placed on the carriageway. Consideration was given to providing a vehicle activated sign bearing 'SLOW DOWN', although this wording alone is not a prescribed sign and therefore not permitted on the highway.

The cost of the additional items requested is approximately £8,000.

Delegated Decision:

After consultation with the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Highways and Transportation and the appropriate ward councillors, I have used my delegated authority to carry out the recommendations contained in the report, for the reasons stated in the original report.

Name: Mr Andrew Millard

Position: Head of Strategic Planning and Delivery.

Date of Decision:

Deadline for call-in:

In the event of any departure from the original proposed decision, the rationale for departing from that proposed decision must be stated.