

September 2021		ITEM dem services to add number
Delegated Decision Report		
Location – West Road, South Ockendon		
Wards and communities affected: Ockendon	Key Decision: No	
Portfolio Holder: Councillor B Maney – Environment & Highways		
Accountable Assistant Director: Leigh Nicholson, Assistant Director of Planning, Transportation and Public Protection		
Accountable Director: Julie Rogers, Corporate Director of Public Realm		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

In June 2020, DfT grant funding was provided to the Council under the Government's Active Travel Tranche 1 programme to help introduce schemes that would encourage Walking and Cycling as the Country came out of the national lockdown.

Thurrock used this funding to improve sustainable and healthy routes around 4 Travel Hubs (Train Stations) by introducing schemes which would slow vehicle movements in order to make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists. The four areas in Thurrock were:

- London Road Purfleet
- West Road in South Ockendon
- London Road/Church Hill & Butts Lane in Stanford-le-hope
- Princess Margaret Road/ East Tilbury Road in East Tilbury
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This report considers the results of the consultation and traffic surveys undertaken for the West Road, South Ockendon Scheme.

1. Recommendations

1.1 Considering the comments made during the consultation period and the results of the speed surveys undertaken, the recommendation is that:

- a) The Council remove the temporary 20mph speed limit on West Road

b) Retain the traffic calming measures on West Road

c) The temporary footway widening, on the southern side of West Road be made permanent

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 The purpose of the scheme in South Ockendon was to create a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists along West Road on route to the Station by reducing the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph and installing traffic calming measures to reduce vehicle speed. It is also noted that there are schools in the vicinity that would also benefit from a safer road environment.
- 2.2 The speed limit was lowered along West Road from the junction with Arisdale Avenue in the west to Peartree Close in the east. Speed cushions were installed along the full length of the affected area to help support the speed reduction. The flashing Vehicle Actuated Sign (VAS) was changed from 30mph to 20mph. The narrow southern footway was also widened along its length to enable social distancing.
- 2.3 The scheme was introduced as an experimental Traffic Regulation Order which gave a minimum six-month public consultation on the scheme after it was implemented. The Statutory Consultation was carried out between 20th Oct 2020 to 30th June 2021
- 2.4 The consultation was carried out via the Council's online consultation portal. As part of the consultation, a number of questions were asked regarding perceived vehicle speeds and perception of feeling safe when walking or cycling in the area.
- 2.5 In total 17 residents responded to the questions that were asked, but not all expressed their objection or support to the scheme. After review it is noted that there was one direct objection and there were more negative comments towards the temporary measures, than positive.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 One direct objections for the scheme was received, however, there were also 6 negative comments and 2 positive comments recorded, with the details below:-

<i>Objection 01</i>	It's a waste of time and money and should be removed immediately. How on Earth can a lower speed limit be justified as a Covid measure. The money would be better spent cutting back hedges so road signs are visible and repainting white lines and other notifications
<i>Positive 01</i>	The widening of footpaths is really good idea, maybe speed cameras could be a better idea halfway down the road rather than speed humps

<i>Positive 02</i>	The new speed limit of 20mph is excellent and the introduction of the speed bumps is a great idea
<i>Negative 01</i>	I think it will cost a lot of money, which could be much better spent on repairing the potholes in the roads and will make very little if any difference to the way motorists use the road in general.
<i>Negative 02</i>	Existing speed limit of 30mph is fine, reducing it to 20mph will be ignored and frustrate motorists.
<i>Negative 03</i>	Reducing the speed to twenty mile an hour may seem a good thing but a small core of drivers don't obey the thirty mile an hour so they would just ignore the new speed limit.
<i>Negative 04</i>	At the moment these are quite inadequate as traffic continues to speed, and no "hump" was placed on the zebra crossing used by the local primary school children.
<i>Negative 05</i>	Should be put back to normal speed you are better off spending money on the roads to fix the pot holes
<i>Negative 06</i>	I have used this road for over 40 years and never had a problem, so when Covid struck the council decided to change the speed limit and introduce speed humps and change the 30mph flashing warning sign near Canterbury parade to 20mph and state the reason "Active Travel" what does that exactly mean? There is very limited use of Ockendon station due to the pandemic, I have been using the station every day during the pandemic due to being a key worker, the number of people walking along the road is very minimal, there was never a problem before. I feel the council has wasted an awful lot of money, what was to be gained from this?

3.2 Speed surveys were carried out before the scheme was implemented and on three occasions during the consultation period. The results of the speed surveys indicate that the 85%ile speed prior to the limit was 36.7mph and has subsequently reduced to 27.1mph. This indicates that drivers are ignoring the 20mph limit, but that the speed cushions may have helped keep speeds below 30mph and have seen around 8mph speed reduction.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 The speed survey data indicates that reducing the speed limit to 20mph cannot be justified on West Road, as driver behaviour has not changed significantly to justify the 20mph limit. Therefore, it is recommended that the 20mph speed limit is removed and the original 30mph limit is reinstated on West Road.

4.2 However, it is clear that the traffic calming has had relative success in reducing speed. Therefore, it is recommended that the traffic calming remain in place along the full length of West Road.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 Ward Members:

Cllr A Jefferies, Cllr S Shinnick & Cllr L Spillman

Ward members were consulted between 25th October and 1st November 2021. No comments were received.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

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

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

As the scheme is to be partially removed on West Road, the financial implications would be the cost of disconnection and removing the lit and unlit 20mph signage and the introduction of road hump warning signs.

The cost of these works is estimated at being circa. £6,278.60 and is covered under the Active Travel scheme budget allocation.

There is sufficient funding available for this project.

Implications verified by: Mark Terry
Email: FinancialImplication@thurrock.gov.uk

7.2 Legal

Regulation 22 of the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 enable experimental orders to be made, subject to the procedure in Schedule 5 to the Regulations. Regulation 19 permits an order to be made in part, provided the necessary notices to the public advertising the experimental order have been undertaken. A notice of the making of a modified order can then be made.

Implications verified by: Linda Saunders
Email: LegallImplicationsRequests@thurrock.gov.uk

7.3 Diversity and Equality

The speed cushions which are to remain in place have reduced the overall traffic speed significantly, which has improved the situation for vulnerable road users.

However, the speed reduction measured did not achieve the aim of reducing speeds down to 20mph. Therefore, the removal of the 20 limit will have no detrimental effect on vulnerable road users.

The permanent widening of the footway will enhance safety for all users.

Implications verified by: Roxanne Scanlon
Email: Diversity@thurrock.gov.uk

7.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children

None

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report**

- Survey results
- emails of support
- emails against the proposal

9. **Appendices to the report**

- None

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