

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	10 NOVEMBER 2022	AGENDA ITEM:	
TITLE:	EVALUATION OF LOCAL 15% CIL SCHEME - REDLANDS TRAFFIC CALMING		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	CLIMATE STRATEGY AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	HIGHWAYS & TRAFFIC SERVICES	WARDS:	REDLANDS, KATESGROVE
LEAD OFFICER:	JAMES PENMAN	TEL:	0118 937 2202
JOB TITLE:	NETWORK SERVICES MANAGER	E-MAIL:	NETWORK.MANAGEMENT@READING.GOV.UK

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Local Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding was allocated by the Council to introduce a scheme of measures to improve motorist compliance with the 20mph zone restrictions in specific locations within Redlands Ward and Katesgrove Ward.

Following the delivery of the measures in 2021 and the undertaking of comparative speed surveys and independent Road Safety Audit, this report provides an officer summary of the findings.

- 1.2 The report recommends alterations to a 'priority flow' measure, which will require statutory consultation, and seeks Sub-Committee approval to proceed with development of this alteration once funding is identified.
- 1.3 Appendix 1 - The scheme drawings, as advertised during statutory consultation in 2020.
- 1.4 Appendix 2 - An enlargement of the priority flow measure recommended for alteration.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee notes the content of this report.
- 2.2 That the Sub-Committee agrees to the following, once funding has been identified:
- a. That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to undertake statutory consultation processes for the proposed adjustment

to the priority flow measure (Item 4.7) in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996; and

b. That feedback to the statutory consultation, alongside costings (quotations) for the proposed changes, be reported to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee for a decision on the outcome.

2.3 That no public inquiry be held into the proposal.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The proposals complement the Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP) and Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). The proposals complement the Council's Climate Emergency Strategy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy by aiming to reduce barriers to the greater use of sustainable, healthy transport options.

4. THE PROPOSAL

Current Position

4.1 Addressing the issue of speeding motorists is particularly challenging for a Local Authority. Despite motorists being in no doubt as to the speed limit, through nationally recognised presentation of the Highway, there sadly continues to be a proportion of motorists who wilfully choose to speed.

At this time, speed enforcement - which includes the placement and operation of fixed and mobile enforcement equipment - can only be undertaken by the Police. With funding and resource limitations alongside other policing priorities, enforcement cannot currently be relied upon to provide a sustained method in which to deter speeding.

Local authorities have limited tools in which to address speeding, which are predominantly limited to the implementation of physical speed calming 'features', such as speed humps. It is understandable - and regretful - that the implementation of such features will not be welcomed by many, as they are indiscriminate and impact on the surrounding environment. For a Local Authority a scheme of features can also be resource-intensive and costly to design, install and maintain. However, until mooted mandatory technologies are in place to override motorist inputs and limit vehicle speeds, and/or autonomously impose fines on the offending motorist, there appears to be no alternative to these physical measures.

4.2 Background

In 2016 a 20mph zone was introduced in east Reading, which covered an area broadly bounded by London Road, Christchurch Road, Elmhurst Road, Wokingham Road and Kendrick Road. Despite the benefits that this original scheme delivered, a level of wilful speeding continued.

Funding from local CIL contributions was allocated to the delivery of a scheme of measures that with the objective of improving motorist compliance with this

20mph zone in the Redlands Ward area. A number of roads were prioritised for treatment, namely Kendrick Road, Redlands Road, Morgan Road and Allcroft Road.

At the November 2020 meeting of this Sub-Committee, Officers recommended the introduction of a range of physical traffic calming measures (see Appendix 1), which were agreed for statutory consultation - a requirement for the proposed introduction of the majority of features proposed. Additional 20mph signs were also proposed for the relatively major through-roads within the zone.

The statutory consultation was conducted later in November and the feedback reported to the Sub-Committee at their meeting in January 2021. The Police, and other emergency service providers, are statutory consultees to all such consultations.

- 4.3 Of the 46 responses to the statutory consultation, there were 27 responses supporting the proposals. The objections understandably raised concerns about the potential detrimental impact on the street scene, requested speed enforcement cameras instead of physical measures and raised objections to having speed humps/cushions near to their properties. The latter objections had a particular concentration in reference to the proposed set of cushions at the southern end of Redlands Road.

The Sub-Committee agreed that officers should implement the scheme, but that the set of speed cushions referred above be altered instead for the installation of a build-out at the southern end of the on-street parking bay on Redlands Road.

The scheme of measures was implemented from spring to early summer 2021.

4.4 Speed Surveys

Speed surveys were commissioned and undertaken in early 2022. The surveys were undertaken over a representative one-week period, 24hrs per day, which will have captured both the busier work/school traffic mid-week, leisure-type traffic at the weekends and speeds during periods where overall traffic volumes were far lower (e.g. overnight, where it is sadly expected that speeds can increase).

It is accepted that it is impossible to exactly replicate the conditions of prior surveys, however, best endeavours have been used to conduct the surveys in the same locations as those undertaken previously and the results provide the closest factual baseline and evaluation measures of a scheme such as this.

It is standard practice to analyse the '85th percentile' speeds, which is the speed that 85% of vehicles are traveling at, or below. The findings were as follows:

Allcroft Road

The recent survey indicated that the 85th percentile speed was 24.05mph.

The last survey that we carried out in 2017 indicated that the 85th percentile speed was 31.5mph.

Kendrick Road

The recent survey indicated that the 85th percentile speed was 26.73mph.

The last survey that we carried out in 2018 indicated that the 85th percentile speed was 30.6mph.

Morgan Road

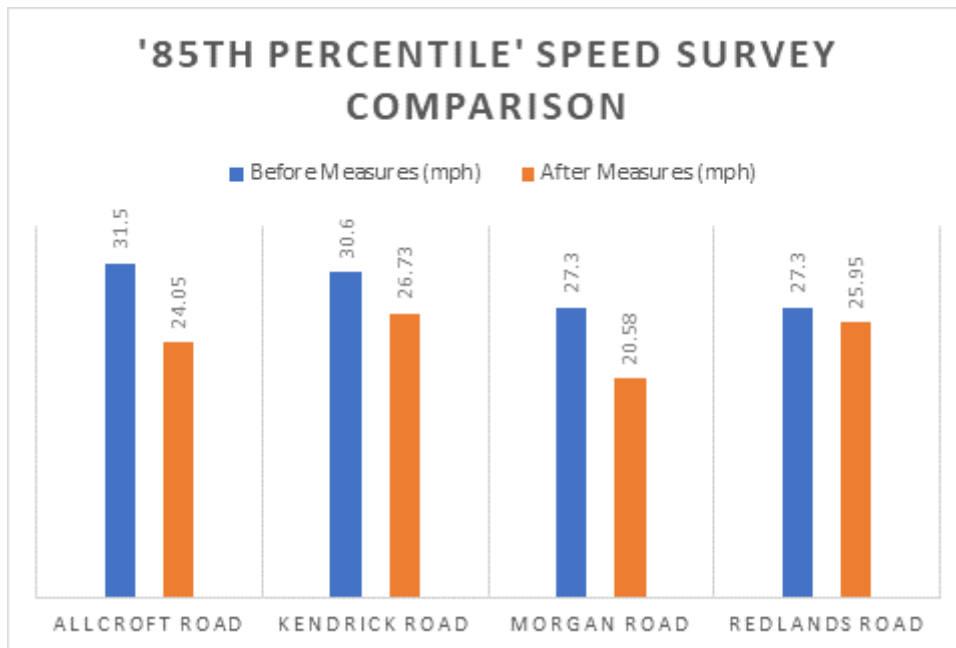
The recent survey indicated that the 85th percentile speed was 20.58mph.

The last survey that we carried out in 2017 indicated that the 85th percentile speed was 27.3mph.

Redlands Road

The recent survey indicated the 85th percentile speed was 25.95mph.

The survey that we carried out in 2018 indicated that the 85th percentile speed was 27.3mph.



The scheme objective was to improve compliance with the 20mph zone restriction - to reduce vehicle speeds. The result of the speed survey comparison indicates that the delivery of these measures has achieved speed reductions. This is particularly evident on Allcroft Road and Morgan Road, where full-width speed humps were installed, which demonstrates the effectiveness of such features.

It is disappointing, however, that there remain a proportion of motorists who are continuing to wilfully speed, regardless of the physical measures in place to discourage them from doing so.

4.5 Feedback

Independent Road Safety Audits have been conducted for this scheme, both at the design stage and on-street, following scheme delivery. These audits are intended to provide an independent view on the safety and regulatory compliance of the features. Officers have also received feedback on the scheme from residents and users (including Reading Cycle Campaign) both directly, and via Ward Councillors.

The following highlights the primary themes of feedback received and officer comments:

4.5.1 Speed humps on Allcroft Road and Morgan Road are too high

There are national regulations and guidance applicable to the design of speed humps, which includes the height of the features. Officers have been clear that the humps/cushions in this scheme area would be to a height that is appropriate for motorists travelling within the 20mph restriction in the Sub-Committee reports that led to agreement for delivery. The intended heights and tolerances were also included in the statutory consultation required for such features.

These speed humps are comfortably within the maximum heights permissible and any replacement with lower humps will be detrimental to their effectiveness in reducing vehicle speeds and improving motorist compliance with the 20mph limit - the intended purpose of the scheme. Officers cannot, therefore, recommend an alteration to these features.

Reports of some motorists 'racing' between speed humps is particularly disappointing and reflective of the poor behaviour of some motorists, which the Council is unlikely to be able to influence.

Comment has been made that the rounded-top nature of the humps '...do not help pedestrians.' The humps have not been placed at pedestrian dropped crossing points and are not otherwise presented as a pedestrian facility. They have been implemented to reduce the speeds of vehicles travelling along the carriageway. The area of positive impact that the scheme was intended to cover did challenge the limited budget. However, there is opportunity to add features to the area in the future, should funding become available, which could include raised tables at pedestrian crossings, as have been installed in other areas of the Borough.

4.5.2 Congestion caused by buildouts on Redlands Road and Kendrick Road

The buildouts along Kendrick Road were an initial proposed design feature, using products that were redeployed from a prior scheme. The build-out on Redlands Road, toward its southern end, was a change to the consulted scheme agreed by the Sub-Committee in response to resident objections against the proposed set of speed cushions at this location. There were no more of the redeployed products available, so it was implemented as a 'typical' kerbed footway build-out.

Many complaints have been received - and a formal question to this Sub-Committee - regarding the perceived negative impact that these features have had on traffic flow. However, these buildouts were installed on the approaching sides to (and within) existing on-street parking bays. They have not added 'obstacles' to traffic flow that would not have previously existed, should vehicles have been parked within the bays as expected.

Any proposals to remove these features should therefore logically include proposals to remove the on-street parking bays in which they

are placed. In certain locations, particularly Redlands Road, this is likely to be objectionable to residents and their visitors due to the limited nearby parking. This would also very likely lead to an increase in vehicle speeds, if other speed calming features were not installed, as there would be greater carriageway width and motorist forward visibility would be significantly extended. Officers cannot, therefore, recommend the removal of these features.

4.5.3 Placement of cushions in the context of cycling and on-street parking

We have received comments regarding the perceived 'poor placement' of some speed cushions, particularly near/adjacent to some areas of on-street parking.

With Kendrick Road and Redlands Road being adjacent to the Royal Berkshire Hospital, as well as being bus routes, speed cushions were proposed for implementation. The placement of cushions is challenging within this area as there are numerous vehicular accesses and junctions, in addition to significant and changeable on-street parking - i.e. there will be different demand levels at different times - on some otherwise wide sections of carriageway. The cushions needed to be placed so that they would be a deterrent for speeding motorists, whether or not the parking bays are occupied.

4.5.4 Priority-flow feature on Redlands Road (near Allcroft Road) causing congestion and is unsafe (Appendix 2)

The feedback proposes that residents/road users are experiencing delays turning right onto Redlands Road, due to the limited space between the Allcroft Road junction and the 'give way' at this feature. There have also been proposals that the feature is unsafe. Feedback has also noted that it is a challenging feature for cyclists, as they are having to give way to oncoming traffic while travelling uphill and that the 'cycle-through' feature is too narrow and unmarked.

During early scheme development it was raised that chicanes, as potential speed calming features, had a level of local support and it was challenging to identify potentially suitable locations at which to propose such features. 'Cycle-through' features were regrettably unfeasible to deliver due to the relatively constricted road widths and officers were additionally reluctant to propose reductions in on-street parking at this feature, due to the potentially detrimental impact this would have had for residents/visitors parking availability. The feedback received for this feature has been helpful to understand and it is accepted that some change is appropriate, as is recommended later in this report.

It is, however, important to note that early feedback suggesting that the Police objected to this feature and considered it unsafe is not the findings of officer discussions with our Thames Valley Police contacts. As referenced earlier in this report, the Police are a statutory consultee to all Highway related statutory consultations and Council officers have a good working relationship with Thames Valley Police in terms of potential Highway safety concerns and incidents involving casualties. The Council also receives initial incident reports from the Police

following incidents on the Highway involving casualties and are often involved in part of any investigation that arises from serious incidents. Suggestions that the feature is unsafe are not evidenced in officer discussion with Thames Valley Police nor within the casualty data supplied to date (up to the end of May 2022).

- 4.6 During the post-delivery independent road safety audit, the auditor was made aware of the primary themes of scheme feedback that the Council had received.

Informal comment was made in reference to the parking bay build-out on Redlands Road (referred in Item 4.5.2), where reference was made to the fact that the parking bay existed before the build-out was installed and that this build-out would unlikely have exacerbated any traffic issues at this location. Their conclusion matched that of officers, in that any proposed resolution to this issue must also involve a review of the parking bay itself.

Of the remainder of the scheme features, it was the priority-flow feature on Redlands Road, referenced in 4.5.4, with which they raised a suggestion of a review requirement. The issue raised was that the parking bay immediately to the south side creates the potential of a long section of carriageway that would be impassable by two-way traffic, to which there would be an expectation to give-way to northbound traffic. It was a concern that this could lead to difficulties with vehicle movements around and to the south of the feature. They referred to resulting 'driver frustration leading to aggressive competition for road space' and raised that this behaviour could increase the likelihood of incidents involving damage and/or injury.

The auditor suggested that either a section of parking be removed, 'unlocking' this potential issue, or that the priority-flow feature be removed. They also recommended that if the priority-flow feature was removed, that an alternative form of traffic calming measures should be installed in its place.

As per Item 4.5.4, officers consider that there needs to be a proposed alteration at this feature.

Options Proposed

- 4.7 There is currently no identified funding for making alterations to this scheme, however, it is acknowledged that there is a requirement for alterations to the priority-flow feature on Redlands Road, to the south of Allcroft Road, as referenced in Items 4.5.4 and 4.6 earlier in this report and shown on Appendix 2.

While there are different options to address the areas raised, which are outlined later in this report, the officer recommendation is considered to fully address the aspects of feedback summarised in item 4.5.4 and that of the road safety auditor in item 4.6.

It is recommended that, once funding has been identified, the priority flow feature at this location is removed in its entirety. As an integral part of this recommended alteration, it is also recommended that officers proceed to statutory consultation on the proposed placement of speed cushions in this approximate location as an alternative speed reduction measure. Feedback

received during the consultation would be reported to a later meeting of the Sub-Committee for a decision on the proposed alteration and that, in agreement with the lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport, the Highway and Traffic Services Manager be permitted to make minor changes to the proposed scheme.

It is considered that this recommendation will address the feedback regarding the reported delays to motorists wishing to turn right from Allcroft Road, removes a give-way that presents difficulties to cyclists travelling uphill and would overcome the concerns raised by the road safety audit without removing a section of the pre-existing on-street parking. The recommendation also addresses the potential of increased traffic speeds by proposing an alternative traffic calming feature in place of the current feature, once funding is identified.

Other Options Considered

- 4.8 A secondary option could be the proposal to retain the priority-flow feature and pursue a reduction of the parking bay to the south. The reduction would need to be the equivalent of 4-5 car lengths, replacing the existing Monday to Sunday 8am - 5.30pm Pay and Display restriction with double-yellow-lines.

This option could be pursued through the next Waiting Restriction Review Programme (2023A), which is a funded programme. If agreed through this process, it would still require statutory consultation alongside the other agreed schemes in the programme.

This option would overcome the concern raised at the road safety audit and *may* reduce the congestion concerns raised when exiting Allcroft Road, but would not address the cyclist concerns. It would also remove a section of local daytime paid parking and resident/visitor overnight parking, which may not be favourable.

- 4.9 A further option is to remove the priority flow feature altogether, with no alternative features implemented. This option would require funding to be identified, but would not require statutory consultation.

This option is not recommended, as it is very likely to lead to an increase in vehicle speeds through this location, despite overcoming the feedback received on the operation of the feature.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The recommendations in this report contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan themes as set out below:

- **Healthy environment**

The recommendation would remove a potential barrier to cycling, and one that has been raised by Reading Cycle Campaign. This could lead to an increase in uptake of this active and healthy transport mode. This can lead to a reduction in motor-vehicle journeys, particularly short local journeys, which can be some of the most polluting, improving air quality by reducing emissions.

The recommendation should also unlock some of the localised congestion and more aggressive driving that has been reported at certain busier times of the day, which would also have an additional positive impact on the environment.

- 5.2 Full details of the Council's [Corporate Plan](#) are available on the website and include information on the projects which will deliver these priorities.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).

- 6.2 A Climate Impact Assessment has been conducted, which considers a net 'Low-positive' impact as a result of the Sub-Committee agreeing to the recommendations of this report.

The changes will require some one-off engineering operations using machinery powered by fossil fuels and some potential material wastage for elements that cannot be redeployed, stored or recycled. However, the illuminated signage that is currently required for the priority flow feature would no longer be required, leading to long-term positive impact on energy use. The changes may also contribute to an increase in local cycling and a reduction of the reported very localised congestion and aggressive driving, which would have a positive impact on vehicle emissions and air quality.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 A full statutory consultation for the scheme was conducted in accordance with appropriate legislation. Notices of intention were advertised in the local printed newspaper and erected on lamp columns within the affected area. The Police, and other defined organisations, are a statutory consultee and were directly notified.

The Sub-Committee considered the feedback received before the resultant scheme was approved for delivery. The scheme has been delivered accordingly.

- 7.2 Officers have considered scheme feedback that has been received since delivery, which has formed a basis of the report recommendations and scheme evaluation.
- 7.3 Traffic Management Sub-Committee is a public meeting. The agendas, reports, meeting minutes and recordings of the meetings are available to view from the Council's website.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2 It is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment is relevant as the report recommendations are not deemed to be discriminatory to persons with protected characteristics, nor do they significantly vary existing operations. Statutory consultation processes have also been conducted, providing an opportunity for objections/support/concerns to be considered prior to a decision being made on whether to implement the scheme. The Council has also been monitoring feedback during the period that this scheme has been in place.

Should the Sub-Committee agree to the recommendations of this report, further statutory consultation will be undertaken in accordance with appropriate regulations.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 New, or changes to existing, Traffic Regulation Orders (as required for the proposed introduction of speed cushions) require advertisement and consultation, under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

This report seeks agreement for the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services to undertake this process, should the Sub-Committee agree to the recommendations of this report.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There is currently no identified funding to develop and implement the recommendations of this report, should Sub-Committee members agree to this. Capital funding would need to be identified and additional reporting for scheme and spend approval may be required for this.

10.2 Funding would be required for the required advertising of the proposed Traffic Regulation Order. Pending the outcome of this statutory consultation, funding would be required for removal of the priority-flow feature and replacement with speed cushions.

Capital Implications

The following are estimates, based on current anticipated material and labour costs.

	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000
Capital funding source to be identified	0	15	0
Total Funding	0	15	0

10.4 Value for Money (VFM)

It is considered that the recommendations of the report provide best value for money in the context of addressing identified and evidenced elements of the delivered scheme requiring adjustment, while still retaining elements that contribute to the original objectives of the scheme.

10.5 Risk Assessment.

There are myriad of factors impacting on fuel and material costs, so there is a degree of uncertainty relating to the estimated costs of delivering the recommended alterations. These factors are outside of the Council's control.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Question to Council - Kendrick Road (Traffic Management Sub-Committee - November 2021).

11.2 CIL Locally Funded Scheme - Redlands 20mph Enhancements: Results of Consultation (Traffic Management Sub-Committee - January 2021)

11.3 CIL Locally Funded Scheme - Redlands 20mph Enhancements (Traffic Management Sub-Committee - November 2020).

11.4 Traffic Management Measures - CIL Funded Schemes (Traffic Management Sub-Committee - November 2019).