

Traffic Management Sub-Committee

11 June 2025



Reading
Borough Council
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Title	CIL Locally Funded Scheme, Northcourt Avenue: Objections to Statutory Consultations for Traffic Calming and Speed Limit Reduction proposals
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Executive Director/ Statutory Officer Commissioning Report	Emma Gee, Executive Director Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services
Report author	James Penman, Network Services Manager
Lead Councillor	Cllr John Ennis, Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport
Council priority	Deliver a sustainable & healthy environment & reduce Reading's carbon footprint
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the Sub-Committee notes the content of this report.2. That the Sub-Committee considers the consultation feedback in Appendix 1 and agree to either implement, amend, or reject the proposed schemes, subject to recommendation 3. Subject to any valid and substantive objection being received, the officer provisional recommendation is to implement the schemes as advertised.3. That should any further written/postal objections be received after this meeting, provided they were sent within the statutory consultation period, the Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services, the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport and the Chair of the Traffic Management Sub-Committee consider these and make an officer decision regarding the implementation, or otherwise, of the scheme.4. That the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to seal the resultant Traffic Regulation Order (Speed Limit Order).5. That respondents to the statutory consultations be informed of the decisions of the Sub-Committee accordingly, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting.6. That no public inquiry be held into the proposals.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions have enabled development of a number of local Transport-related schemes, following allocations agreed in 2022. Officers have been working with Ward Councillors and the Northcourt Avenue Residents Association to develop a scheme to address issues of speeding along the street and Wellington Avenue.

- 1.2. The proposed scheme was reported to this Sub-Committee in [September 2024](#) where officers were given approval to undertake the necessary statutory consultation processes.
- 1.3. Appendix 1 provides the objections resulting from the statutory consultations for the agreed proposals of a speed reduction to 20mph and the installation of traffic calming features (speed humps/tables) on Northcourt Avenue and Wellington Avenue.

Due to the different legal processes required to consult on speed limit changes and on the installation of speed humps/tables, these were two separate consultations undertaken concurrently for the scheme. The objections and feedback have been combined in Appendix 1 as they are both relevant to, and necessary for, potential delivery of the proposed scheme.

Members are asked to consider these objections and conclude the outcome of the proposals.

- 1.4. The statutory consultations for this scheme will conclude following publication of this report, therefore, Appendix 1 will be updated to include the feedback received since the publication of the initial version.

The statutory consultation process is a legal process of proposing restrictions and seeking responses to those proposals. As such, the officer's provisional recommendation remains that the scheme proposed be implemented as advertised, unless a valid and substantive objection(s) is received against that scheme. Appendix 1 will provide officer comments to reflect any alternative officer recommendations, if applicable. Members are reminded that no final decision will be made until all consultation responses have been thoroughly considered.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTA) sets out the legal basis for making Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), including Speed Limit Orders (SLOs). It gives local authorities the power to make TROs to regulate or restrict traffic as needed for:
 - (a) avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising, or
 - (b) preventing damage to the road or to any building on or near the road, or
 - (c) facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians), or
 - (d) preventing the use of the road by vehicular traffic of a kind which, or its use by vehicular traffic in a manner which, is unsuitable having regard to the existing character of the road or adjoining property, or
 - (e) preserving the character of the road in a case where it is especially suitable for use by persons on horseback or on foot, or
 - (f) preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs or
 - (g) any of the purposes specified in paragraphs (a) to (c) of subsection (1) of section 87 of the Environment Act 1995
- 2.2. Reading Borough Council's Transport Strategy 2024 is a statutory document that sets the plan for developing the Borough's transport network. It includes guiding policies and principles including those related to Network Management (RTS17), Parking (RTS20), Enforcement (RTS21) and Demand Management (RTS22). Reference to the Borough's Red Route is contained within this strategy.
- 2.3. The Council Plan for the years 2025/28 includes priorities of delivering a sustainable and healthy environment and to reduce our carbon footprint, which align closely with the

provisions of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA), as both seek to improve public wellbeing and sustainable development.

3. The Proposal

Current Position

- 3.1. At Policy Committee in [March 2022](#), the Council agreed to allocate local CIL funding to enable the development and intended delivery of initiatives across many Council service areas. Within these allocations were traffic management schemes, all of which had been previously captured within the 'Requests for Traffic Management Measures' report that is updated to this Sub-Committee twice annually. A total of £200k was allocated to deliver the scheme 'Northcourt Avenue speed reduction'.
- 3.2. Speed survey data and officer investigations informed initial concept scheme designs and there have been some useful and constructive meetings held with officers, Ward Councillors and representatives of NARA (Northcourt Avenue Residents Association).

Through these discussions, a scheme was agreed and was reported to the Sub-Committee in [September 2024](#). It was agreed at the meeting that the proposals should proceed to statutory consultation.

The intention with the proposal for a 20mph speed limit is that it will be made compliant (and reduce traffic speeds) via the installation of full-width speed humps/tables of a 'sinusoidal' influenced design that is intended to lessen the initial impact. This design has been recently used on Boston Avenue and Shaw Road for new humps that were added and is intended to be more cycle-friendly and a less noise-generating design.

- 3.3. Owing to the different legal processes required to consult on proposed Speed Limit Orders (SLOs) and speed humps, this scheme required two statutory consultations to be undertaken simultaneously. The statutory consultations for both the traffic calming features and reduced speed limit were carried out between 15th May and 6th June 2025. The feedback that was received for both consultations has been combined and provided in Appendix 1, as both consulted elements are necessary to deliver the overall scheme.

The Sub-Committee is asked to note that the completion of the statutory consultation is after the deadline for report publication. As such, this report is being published initially containing the consultation feedback that has been received up to the publication deadlines and that an updated version of Appendix 1 will be published as soon as practicable following the completion of the consultation.

Options Considered

- 3.4. The Sub-Committee is asked to consider the content of the objections against the proposals in the updated final version of Appendix 1:

- a. **[Recommended]** Agree to implement the scheme as advertised, subject to substantive objection being received.

This is not a predetermination of the outcome of the consultation. The purpose of the statutory consultation processes is to propose the introduction of the restrictions in the Order/Notice. The officer recommendation is therefore to introduce the scheme as advertised.

However, there will be situations where the content of an objection may provide cause for officers to recommend a different recommendation, such as a substantive issue that hadn't been anticipated during the scheme design. Given that, at the time of writing, the consultation has not concluded, officers will highlight where a different outcome is recommended.

Where the scheme is agreed for implementation as advertised, arrangements will be made to make and seal the resultant Order and introduce the scheme.

b. Agree not to introduce the scheme

Where a decision is taken not to proceed with introducing the scheme, the Order will not proceed to be made and it will be left to lapse (as per d.) and no element will be introduced.

Introducing only the speed limit order without traffic calming would make the scheme non-compliant with national requirements, as it would contain no features to encourage lower vehicle speeds (self-enforcement). This is not considered feasible without the introduction of alternative and effective physical traffic calming measures, of which humps are considered the most effective measure.

Introducing only the traffic calming features would significantly alter the signing requirements of the scheme, having initial and ongoing additional budgetary impact and adding ongoing additional negative environmental impact. This is not recommended.

c. Agree an amended version of the scheme be introduced

While it is possible to adjust the scheme that is to be included in the resultant Order and introduced, there are risks in doing so due to the compliance with legal processes for consulting and implementing Orders. If there is considered to be a risk that such a change could have changed the way in which people would have responded to the statutory consultation, it is likely that such a proposed amendment would require re-consulting.

d. Do nothing

If no decision is taken and the Order is not sealed within two years following the date of the statutory consultation commencing, the proposed SLO becomes void and cannot be implemented.

- 3.5. There is a risk that written/postal consultation submissions sent within the consultation period may not have been received by officers in time for this Sub-Committee meeting. It is therefore recommended that, as per recommendation 3 of this report, there is a delegated process in place to consider these and make a final implementation decision if this situation arises.

The recommended delegation is that the Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services, the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport and the Chair of the Traffic Management Sub-Committee consider these and that an officer decision regarding the implementation, or otherwise, of the scheme be made.

In this situation, Ward Councillors and respondents to the statutory consultation will be informed of this decision and a further update report to a future Sub-Committee meeting will confirm the outcome.

4. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 4.1. The Council Plan has established five priorities for the years 2025/28. These priorities are:

- Promote more equal communities in Reading
- Secure Reading's economic and cultural success
- Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint
- Safeguard and support the health and wellbeing of Reading's adults and children
- Ensure Reading Borough Council is fit for the future

- 4.2. In delivering these priorities, we will be guided by the following set of principles:

- Putting residents first
- Building on strong foundations
- Recognising, respecting, and nurturing all our diverse communities

- Involving, collaborating, and empowering residents
 - Being proudly ambitious for Reading
- 4.3. Full details of the Council Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the Council's website - [Council plan - Reading Borough Council](#). These priorities and the Council Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.
- 4.4. The recommendations in this report align with the Council's priorities, namely:

Deliver a sustainable and healthy environment and reduce our carbon footprint

The Road Traffic Regulation Act enables the Council to introduce measures like speed limits and restrictions on certain vehicles. These provisions directly support reducing pollution, improving air quality and creating spaces where people feel the benefits of clean air and active travel like walking and cycling.

By implementing TROs, the Council can create more green spaces and pedestrian friendly areas, aligning with its goal of promoting a healthy environment which has a positive impact on the life of every resident – making Reading a greener, more attractive place to live, with a tangible impact on physical and mental health and life expectancy.

These actions also support accessibility and mobility, which are key to thriving, connected communities, ensuring everyone including the vulnerable can safely use public spaces, regardless of age or ability.

By managing traffic to reduce congestion and improve public transport flow, the Council can boost local economic activities and make it easier for everyone to access education, skills and training and good jobs.

Speeding and inappropriate driving, or the perception/risk thereof, can be a barrier to the use of active and sustainable transport choices such as walking and cycling. Anecdotally, this type of driving is seen more regularly on routes that are perceived to provide a useful shortcut between destinations, especially when they are straight and well-sighted, as is the case with Northcourt Avenue and Wellington Road.

The implementation of a 20mph scheme along with regularly placed speed calming measures throughout will introduce an environment that is very different and forces a different behaviour from motorists. The scheme is expected to reduce both the average speed of traffic, but particularly the peak speeds of vehicular traffic and act as a potential deterrent to vehicles using the area as a short-cut.

5. Environmental and Climate Implications

- 5.1. The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 5.2. A climate impact assessment has been conducted for the recommendations of this report, resulting in a net minor positive impact.

Any civil engineering scheme will create an element of negative impact through material use and the vehicles involved for delivery. However, the scheme has been designed with environmental and ongoing maintenance considerations from the outset and will therefore not be using specialised materials/surfacing, high-maintenance items, nor have any electrical works involved (e.g. illuminated signs).

The initial negative impacts are therefore one-off for delivery, for a scheme that is expected to be very low maintenance and have significant longevity. Given that the scheme is expected to reduce barriers to using sustainable/active transport modes and be a deterrent to local shortcut traffic (improvement to immediate air quality), the longer-term benefits are expected to outweigh the very short-term negative impact.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1. Officers have been meeting with Ward Councillors and NARA (Northcourt Avenue Residents Association) throughout the development of the scheme proposals. Officers will continue to ensure that Ward Councillors and NARA are kept informed of progress.
- 6.2. Statutory consultation has been carried out in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, advertised on street, in the local printed newspapers and on the Council's website. Notices have been advertised in the local printed newspaper and erected, typically on lamp columns, as close as possible to affected area.
- 6.3. 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.

7. Equality Implications

- 7.1. 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.
- 7.2. It is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment is relevant as the proposals are not anticipated to have a differential impact on people with protected characteristics. The statutory consultation process provides an opportunity for objections/ support/ concerns to be considered prior to a decision being made on whether to implement the proposals.

8. Other Relevant Considerations

- 8.1. There are none.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. The Council has considered all of its legal obligations when seeking to make Traffic Regulation Orders and Speed Limit Orders (SLOs).
- 9.2. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 sets out the legal basis for making TROs. The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 provides for the statutory processes to be followed in making TROs and SLOs.
- 9.3. Before making an Order, the local authority must carry out a statutory consultation, engaging with the Chief of Police, residents, businesses, emergency services and transport operators. A notice detailing the proposed restrictions and the reasoning behind them is published in a local newspaper and displayed on site in the areas where the restrictions would apply. Members of the public have 21 days in which to submit objections or comments on the proposal. In order for any comments to be valid, it must be in writing, state the grounds on which it is made and sent to the address specified in the notice.

With any TRO/SLO proposals, the Council (either via delegated authority, or by agreement of the Traffic Management Sub-Committee) may decide whether to proceed with the Order as published, modify it, or abandon it. If it is agreed to proceed, the Order is formally made and a further notice is published giving the date when the order comes into force. The final step is to implement the restrictions by installing the necessary signage and road markings.

- 9.4. The Highways Act 1980, Section 90C sets out the legal basis for consulting on the proposal to construct a road hump.
- 9.5. Before road humps can be installed, the local authority must publish a statutory notice for the proposals, in consultation with the Chief of Police and other statutory consultees. A notice detailing the proposals (the nature, dimensions and location(s) of the proposed road hump) is published in a local newspaper and displayed on site in the areas where the road hump(s) is proposed to be installed. Members of the public have 21 days in which to submit objections or comments on the proposal. In order for any comments to be valid, it must be in writing, state the grounds on which it is made and sent to the address specified in the notice.

The Council (either via delegated authority, or by agreement of the Traffic Management Sub-Committee) may decide whether to proceed with the implementation of the speed hump(s) as published, modify it, or abandon it. If it is agreed to proceed, the hump(s) may be implemented, subject to the implementation of necessary signage and road markings and any other necessary Order associated with the compliant delivery of the scheme.

- 9.6. The Council has considered its Network Management Duty under the Traffic Management Act 2004 and its Section 122 duty under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Network Management Duty

- 9.7. Part 2 Section 16 (1) of The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty on the Council as a local traffic authority to manage their road network with a view to achieving, so far as may be reasonably practicable having regard to their other obligations, policies and objectives, the following objectives—

(a) securing the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network; and

(b) facilitating the expeditious movement of traffic on road networks for which another authority is the traffic authority.

(2) The action which the authority may take in performing that duty includes, in particular, any action which they consider will contribute to securing—

(a) the more efficient use of their road network; or

(b) the avoidance, elimination or reduction of road congestion or other disruption to the movement of traffic on their road network or a road network for which another authority is the traffic authority;

and may involve the exercise of any power to regulate or co-ordinate the uses made of any road (or part of a road) in the road network (whether or not the power was conferred on them in their capacity as a traffic authority). This duty places an ongoing obligation in ensuring overall traffic efficiency and network performance and not only applies to vehicles but all to pedestrians and cyclists.

Section 122 duty

- 9.8. Further Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 places a duty on the local authority so far as practicable to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway. In carrying out this exercise the Council must have regard to the following:

- Desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises.
- The effect on the amenities of any locality effected and (without prejudice to the generality of this paragraph) the importance of regulating and restricting the use of roads by heavy commercial vehicles, so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the areas through which the road(s) run.

- The strategy prepared under Section 80 of the Environment Act 1995 (the national air quality strategy).
- The importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles.
- Any other matters appearing to the local authority to be relevant.

9.9. This duty focuses on the making of individual traffic regulation decisions.

9.10. Each of these duties has been considered in detail in relation to the scheme identified in this report.

9.11. Patricia Tavernier has cleared these Legal Implications.

10. Financial Implications

10.1. Subject to the implementation decision of the Sub-Committee, it is anticipated that the scheme as advertised can be fully implemented in the financial year 2025/26 and post implementation speed surveys and independent Road Safety Audit (stage 3) undertaken. The total Local 15% CIL funding allocation toward this project was £200,000, which is anticipated to be spent in the 2025/26 financial year. Less than £1,000 of this funding was spent on the development of this scheme in the 2024/25 financial year.

Capital Implications

10.2. This scheme is funded by a Local 15% CIL capital funding allocation of £200,000. As per Section 10.1, it is anticipated that this funding will be fully spent on the delivery of this scheme in the financial year 2025/26, should the Sub-Committee agree to the implementation of the scheme at this meeting.

Value for Money (VFM)

10.3. Officers consider that the recommended scheme will provide the best outcomes based on the funding available and the purpose to which it has been allocated – speed reduction.

The scheme has been investigated and designed by officers of Reading Borough Council and all civil engineering work will be undertaken by the Council's in-house delivery team. The exceptions will be specialisms that currently lay outside of the Council's current resources, such as new regulatory lining implementation, regulatory sign creation and supply. However, these will be appointed through existing contracts and using contractors that conduct these works to a scale that provides value for money through their chargeable rates.

Road Safety Audits have been outsourced to a contractor with these specialisms, but also provide an independent perspective and professional, constructive scrutiny of the scheme designs, which can assist in defending potential challenges.

Ongoing maintenance of the resultant scheme is expected to be minimal and there are no additional electrical (illumination) elements being delivered for the scheme, which removes this element as an ongoing revenue budget pressure.

Risk Assessment

10.4. There will always be an element of financial risk regarding more complex works that require excavation and adjustment to the Highway layout. These risks should be minimised pre-excavation, as officer investigations have included colleagues from the delivery team. However, there is a risk of unforeseen engineering challenges, even following the receipt of utility plans. It is beneficial that the civil engineering work is being conducted by Reading Borough Council (and the maintenance thereafter), as this ensures close communication and true joint working throughout delivery.

10.5. Andy Stockle has cleared these Financial Implications.

11. Timetable for Implementation

- 11.1. The following table provides the intended timeline for deliver of the scheme, which is based on approval being given to proceed to delivery at this meeting:

Line	Milestone	When (Subject to change)
1	Make the resultant Order	Summer 2025
2	Deliver the scheme	Summer - Autumn 2025
3	Post implementation speed surveys and Road Safety Audit	Winter 2025>26

12. Background Papers

- 12.1. There are none.

Appendices –

1. Objections and other feedback received to the statutory consultation – combines feedback to the 20mph and speed hump consultations
2. Drawings for the proposed scheme