

AREA COMMITTEE: EAST LUTON

DATE: 28th SEPTEMBER 2006

SUBJECT: HEDLEY RISE AND COLWELL RISE – TRAFFIC CALMING

REPORT BY: HEAD OF ENGINEERING & TRANSPORTATION

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IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL	COMMUNITY SAFETY
EQUALITIES	ENVIRONMENT
FINANCIAL	CONSULTATIONS
STAFFING	OTHER

WARDS AFFECTED: WIGMORE

PURPOSE

1. To report to this Area Committee results of a consultation on proposed traffic calming measures for Hedley Rise and Colwell Rise.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. That the East Luton Area Committee agree to the implementation of speed cushions and traffic islands on Hedley Rise and Colwell Rise together with an area wide 20 mph speed limit, subject to the statutory consultation/advertising procedures.
3. That the East Luton Area Committee agree to a £15K contribution towards this scheme over the next two financial years.

REPORT

4. For some time there have been road safety concerns due to the speed of traffic using Hedley Rise. These concerns have been raised at several of the Area Committees. There has been some recorded personal injury crashes in the road

and there has been some non-injury crashes along the road, two of which have involved damage to adjacent houses.

5. In light of the concerns expressed by local residents, a consultation took place on two possible road safety schemes for Hedley Rise in February 2006 and consisted of leaflets/questionnaires being delivered to every property in the area. Option 1 consisted of two new traffic islands to help pedestrians cross Hedley Rise and to encourage slower speeds together with central hatched road markings to visually narrow the traffic lanes with regular 'SLOW' markings on the road to further encourage slower speeds. Option 2 consisted of four 'changes of priority' along Hedley Rise in order to break up the flow of traffic along the road.
6. A good response to the consultation was received with over 200 replies, a response rate of around 20%. The results showed that a large majority of people believed that safety measures are required for Hedley Rise. Option 1 was the preferred option of the two put forward being supported by slightly more people than Option 2. In the comments section of the questionnaire several people raised concerns about the safety of Option 2. Concerns were also raised about the effectiveness of Option 1. Quite a number of replies stated that road humps/cushions were needed and not the two options being suggested. **There was also concerns expressed at the treatment of Hedley Rise in isolation and that this would exacerbate problems on Colwell Rise.** The results have been summarised in the following table:

		Yes	No
1	Do you agree that safety measures are required for Hedley Rise?	184	14
2	Are you in favour of Option 1 for Hedley Rise? (Road markings and 2 traffic islands)?	101	50
3	Are you in favour of Option 2 for Hedley Rise? (Changes in priority)?	93	54

7. The consultation for Hedley Rise was carried out under the instruction of the Area Committee. The options put forward were (relatively) low cost and designed to try to reduce any major knock on effects to Colwell Rise. The two options put forward are not felt to be the most appropriate for Hedley Rise and Colwell Rise in terms of reducing traffic speeds and improving safety and doing so without causing displaced traffic problems. It is for these reasons that the Area Studies programme of work was approved by Executive. This programme of work aims to treat the worst areas first and to try to ensure problems are not merely transferred from one area/road to another. It is accepted that the Wigmore Area that contains Hedley Rise/Colwell Rise is low down the Area Studies priority list, but that there are real local concerns regarding traffic problems in these roads. **However, the implementation of either of the options in Hedley Rise alone was not felt to be an appropriate way forward.**
8. In order to move forward positively with this problem it is was agreed in consultation with Local Ward Councillors and the Portfolio Holder that both Hedley Rise and Colwell Rise be treated together. The cost of treating these two roads has been estimated at £65K. It was agreed that this should be substantially funded from the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Budget allocation for Small Scale Traffic

Management measures over a two year period with a fixed contribution of £15k from the Area Committee. Therefore allocations of £25K have been earmarked from each of the 2006/07 and 2007/08 LTP budgets. The aim would be to start work towards the end of the current financial year and then to complete the works at the start of the following financial year. It is noted that these schemes will require nearly a third of the total Small Scale Traffic Management budget for next two years which needs to cover the whole of the borough.

9. In light of the above, a further consultation was carried out for both Hedley Rise and Colwell Rise; again two options are considered. The first option was similar to Option 1 in the first consultation (central hatched road markings to visually narrow the traffic lanes with regular 'SLOW' markings). While this scheme would have limited speed reduction benefits, it would have less impact on buses, emergency services and general traffic and would be cheaper to introduce. The second option was speed cushions (small square speed humps normally placed in pairs). Speed humps were considered but were felt to be inappropriate due to the bus services and emergency services that use these roads. A 20mph speed limit for the area was also suggested, but would only be appropriate with the speed cushion option. For both options, three pedestrian traffic islands could be introduced to help pedestrians cross these busy roads where existing paths cross the road.
10. The second consultation was carried out in July 2006 and consisted of a leaflet/questionnaire drop to all the properties in the area. A total of 166 replies were received (a response rate of about 14% which again is reasonably good). The key responses were as follows:
 - 146 (88%) of people agreed that safety measures were required for these roads
 - 69 (42%) of people were in favour of Option 1 with 57 (34%) of people against
 - 83 (50%) of people were in favour of Option 2 with 56 (34%) of people against
 - 78 (47%) of people were in favour of a 20mph zone with 56 (34%) of people against
 - 138 (83%) of people were in favour of pedestrian islands with 15 (9%) of people against
11. It can therefore be seen that a large majority of people feel that safety measures are required along these roads. Option 2 is the preferred option. There was also support for the 20 mph zone. It is noted that a significant number of people voted against these measures. There was strong support for the proposed pedestrian islands.
12. There have been seven slight reported personal injury accidents in these roads in the last three years (6 on Hedley Rise and 1 on Colwell Rise) which strengthens the case for measures to be taken, though these would still not justify immediate treatment with funding from the LTP allocations.
13. This scheme was discussed at a Traffic Liaison meeting which is attended by bus operators. Centre Bus presently use both Hedley Rise and Colwell Rise. They are presently reviewing their bus operation in this area and one option may be to remove the service from Colwell Rise, whilst maintaining the frequency of services

in the area. **The bus operator is concerned at the number of speed cushions in Option 2 and state that if Option 2 is introduced it is more likely that they will withdraw the service on Colwell Rise.**

14. In line with the responses to the consultation it is recommend that Option 2 with the 20mph zone for the area are introduced together with the pedestrian islands. Option 2 would address the accident record significantly better than Option 1. The speed cushions and 20 mph will require statutory consultation/advertising to be carried out which may give rise to formal objections.
15. As stated above, this scheme is to be part funded by the Area Committee (a fixed contribution of £15K, possibly split over 2006/7 and 2007/8). The implementation of these schemes is conditional on the contribution from the Area Committee. It is felt that this contribution is important in order to ensure the integrity of the Area Studies approach.

OPTIONS

16. The following options are available:
 1. Do Nothing – this will not address the concerns of local people or the existing accident problem.
 2. Introduce the pedestrian islands and monitor the traffic and accident problems – this would only partially address the local concerns and existing accident problem.
 3. Introduce the speed cushions and 20 mph speed limit – this is the recommended option and should address the local concerns and existing accident problem. However, this will cause additional inconvenience for motorists and buses in particular.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

17. The cost of the proposed measures can be met from existing budget allocations contained within the Integrated Transport Local Transport Plan allocations for 2006/07 and 2007/08 together with a fixed contribution of £15k from the Area Committee. This has been agreed with the departmental Finance Manager on 8th September 2006.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

18. There are no specific legal implications in this report and this has been agreed with the relevant solicitor in Legal Services on 6th September 2006.

APPENDIX

None

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100D**

Report to Executive 10th April 2006