

Item No.

REPORT TO THE HEAD OF HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

June 2019

OBJECTION TO PROPOSED ROAD SAFETY MEASURES ASSOCIATED WITH CLYDACH SAFE ROUTES IN COMMUNITIES 2019~20 PROPOSED TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS, SPEED HUMPS, EXTENSION TO EXISTING 20MPH LIMIT IN CLYDACH, SWANSEA.

Summary

Purpose:	This report refers to fifteen letters received in respect to proposals to introduce a series of measures in the Clydach area through the Safe Routes in Communities initiative. These are aimed at improving road safety and promoting walking and cycling in the area.
Reason for Decision:	To consider the objections and to determine how to proceed.
Consultation:	Local Ward Members, Legal & Democratic Services.
Recommendation(s):	It is recommended that <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the objections are noted.• the traffic regulation orders are implemented as advertised with the exception of the “No waiting Mon-Fri 8am-4pm” order proposed for the eastern side of Twyn y Bedw be curtailed by a length of 10m. Total length of revised order to be 52m.• On completion of the works, that the effectiveness of the speed limit zone, operation of the speed humps and Regulation Orders in Clydach are monitored.• the objectors are informed of the decision.

1.0 Background:

- 1.1 As part of the Safe Routes in Communities initiative, it is proposed to introduce a series of measures in the Clydach area aimed at improving road safety with the aim of promoting walking and cycling in the area.
- 1.2 A key objective of the proposals is to improve pedestrian safety on the roads immediately surrounding the school area where there is a desire to moderate vehicle speeds. The risk to school children is obviously highlighted at school start and finish times along pupil migration routes.

To help achieve this aim, it is proposed to expand on the existing measures by implementing a series of 13 flexibly constructed speed humps on the surrounding roads, restrictions to parking and providing two time limited bus bays for use by the school transport vehicles. Not only will this help in moderating traffic flows during the operational times of the school, the introduction of the speed humps will also benefit the local community by creating a safer environment for pedestrians outside these times, encouraging walking and cycling in the longer term.

2.0 Details of the objections and responses thereafter

- 2.1 The Council has received fifteen letters of correspondence in relation to the proposals, comprising of eight letters of objection and seven letters containing comments largely supporting the proposals.
- 2.2 Two residents objected on the grounds that the proposed measures would increase air and noise pollution to unacceptable levels.
- 2.3 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.2 - it should be noted that, rather than causing a detriment, the presence of a speed hump can result in a substantial drop in traffic noise levels. The Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) carried out research in 1996 entitled "Traffic Calming: Traffic and Vehicle noise. This research involved measuring a variety of heavily trafficked routes where road humps and several types of speed cushions were installed. These studies were followed up by a controlled trial on the TRL test track at Crowthorne. The research showed that after the installation of road humps and speed cushions, the maximum noise levels from light vehicles (cars and small vans) are reduced. So too is the overall traffic noise level when light vehicles form most of the traffic stream. However, the effect of road humps and speed cushions on noise from large vehicles is not as conclusive. There are some decreases in maximum vehicle noise levels from large commercial vehicles due to reductions in their speeds but this can be offset by increases in noise from the bodywork including empty trailers as they pass over the humps or cushions. The net effect of these vertical deflection measures on overall traffic noise therefore depends on the proportion of large commercial vehicles in the traffic stream and on the type of road hump installed. Since the traffic composition for the affected roads in the Clydach area is predominantly light vehicles travelling over speed humps then this should result in a decrease in overall traffic noise as well as individual vehicle noise.*

In relation to air pollution, the designed traffic calming measures are aimed at moderating vehicle speeds. It is not anticipated that the proposed measures will engender the acceleration/deceleration patterns associated with increased levels of emission as traffic volumes are insufficient to cause any significant increase in pollution.

- 2.4 Two residents objected on the grounds that the location of a proposed speed hump would negatively affect access to the front of their properties.
- 2.5 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.4 – In order to form a positive traffic calming measure, it is essential that speed reducing features are placed at regularly spaced intervals to effectively moderate vehicle speeds. All proposed locations will be positioned as to be sympathetic to the street scene and residents' access requirements. There is some scope for minor adjustments within the guidelines.*
- 2.6 Two residents objected on the grounds that the proposed measures were unnecessary as perceived speeds in the area were low.
- 2.7 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.6 – A recent speed survey in the area resulted in an overall 85th percentile speed of 27.2mph. The highest speed recorded was 45mph and at the am/pm school start/finish times, 85th percentile speeds were 26.6mph and 26mph respectively. The proposed measures will ensure the new speed limit within the zone of 20mph is adhered to throughout the day.*
- 2.8 Three residents objected on the grounds that the proposed measures would have a negative effect on available parking for residents, businesses, school staff, parents, residents with severe mobility concerns, carers and other health support staff.
- 2.9 *Response to the objection raised in para. 2.8 –The parking restrictions proposed are designed to address pedestrian safety concerns on Twyn y Bedw and to provide designated locations where pupils arriving by minibus can be safely set down and picked up at school start and finish times. Twyn y Bedw is a “one-way” narrow access road with limited width available to provide a safe, kerbed footway for pedestrians. Circa. 2004 a scheme was introduced to provide an “on carriageway” advisory footway, this was further highlighted by coloured surfacing and road markings. The safe use of this advisory footway has been hampered by indiscriminate parking of vehicles along the wall on the opposite side of the road. This means that through traffic has to drive over the advisory footway in order to safely negotiate around the parked cars. This practice puts the safety of pedestrians and school children at risk. The proposals would only restrict parking Monday–Friday 8am–4pm to cover the operational times of the school. Outside these times, the road space may be used by the local community. The Council recognises the requirements of individuals with impaired mobility and that any restrictions proposed would need to be sympathetic to these needs. Subsequently, the effective length of the “No waiting Monday-Friday 8am-4pm” proposal has been reduced by 10m.*
- 2.10 Three residents commented that a preferred alternative would be a more expansive “One Way” system.

- 2.11 *Response to the comment in para. 2.10 – The provision of a more widespread one way system alone would do very little to address issues of speed. Statistically, speeds on residential streets subject to a one way regulation tend to be significantly higher post implementation. Largely, this is due to the drivers of vehicles believing they are unlikely to encounter a vehicle travelling in the opposite direction, so are more inclined to increase the speed at which they drive. Whilst, this solution may be considered a viable alternative, it would not likely achieve the aspirations of the scheme highlighted in previous paragraphs.*
- 2.12 One resident commented on the possibility of the construction of a footway along Twyn y Bedw by acquiring land to the west of the road via Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO).
- 2.13 *Response to the comment in para. 2.12 – Whilst in theory, providing a footway at this location would be a preferred option, the legal process involved in acquiring the necessary land required to construct a footway is a very long and time consuming one involving multiple land owners and their legal representation. It is not considered to be a viable option at this time. However, it is certainly a consideration for future improvements.*

3.0 General comments

- 3.1 The scheme as described has the target of promoting the growth in walking, cycling and other forms of sustainable transport by providing an environment where the community feel it is safe to consider alternatives to the car. By targeting children it is aimed at changing culture and helping to promote a healthier lifestyle and also opening the community to them by creating a significantly safer environment where walking or cycling are seen as the normal way of travelling to school.
- 3.3 The Council is taking a dual approach by actively moderating vehicle speeds along the roads surrounding the school sites and simultaneously lowering the speed limits. The aims of the scheme are tied to the Welsh Government's aspirations as set out in the Active Travel Act.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 The basis for the scheme is predominantly related to promoting a safer environment for walking and cycling within the local community, it is felt that the managing of speed on the roads surrounding Clydach Primary School Sites together with lowering of the speed limit in one of the primary residential areas is fundamental in engendering the environment to encourage these sustainable forms of transport.

5.0 Legal Implication:

5.1 The Traffic Regulation Orders have been proposed in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 which require that Notice of the proposals is advertised in a newspaper circulating in the area. Before a Traffic Regulation Order can be made it is necessary to consider all objections. Where objections have been made the Council must be satisfied that it is appropriate to make the order, having considered the objections.

6.0 Recommendation:

6.1 It is recommended that;

- the objections are noted
- the traffic regulation orders are implemented as advertised with the exception of the "No waiting Mon-Fri 8am-4pm" order proposed for the western side of Twyn y Bedw be curtailed by a length of 10m. Total length of revised order to be 52m.
- once all works are completed that the speed limit and operation of the proposed speed humps are monitored
- that the objectors are informed of the decision

7.0 Background Papers:

7.1 Fifteen letters were considered in the preparation of this report.

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