

**Decision Session - Executive Member for Transport & Planning**      **11 May 2017**

Report of the Corporate Director of Economy & Place

**Haxby Road (north of New Earswick) : Triple Speed Cushion Replacement Trials**

**Summary**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to replace the existing triple speed-cushion arrangements at two sites on Haxby Road to the north of New Earswick. The replacement is proposed to be done on a trial basis. The results of the trial would then be brought back to the Executive Member for a decision as to whether the cushions should be replaced with a different layout and for approval to implement the chosen layout at the two sites.

**Recommendations**

2. The Executive Member is asked to approve the proposed trial laid out in Option 1 in order to identify whether there is a more appropriate layout to that which is currently in-situ at the two sites.

Reason: To enable officers to trial two different layouts which will be evaluated over a three-month period and a report brought back to a subsequent Decision Session detailing the results of the trial and for approval of the final replacement layout.

**Background**

3. There are currently two sets of triple speed-cushions located on Haxby Road immediately north of the Joseph Rowntree School (see Annex A for a diagram of the current layout). These two sets of speed cushions were installed at different times. The southern set were installed around 2011 as part of a resurfacing scheme to ensure better compliance with the Joseph Rowntree School Safety Zone 20mph speed limit. The northern set were installed more recently in 2015 as part of the Haxby to Clifton Moor Cycle Route when the school's 20mph zone was extended further north to encompass a new speed table crossing point.

4. Ordinarily when introducing traffic-calming on a road using speed cushions this is achieved by installing one cushion in each running lane. The section of Haxby Road under consideration is, however, too wide for a two cushion layout to be successful in slowing all traffic as there would either be a large gap between the two cushions in the centre of the carriageway, which a vehicle could drive through and not have to slow down, or a large gap down either edge of the carriageway where drivers could also avoid the cushions by driving partly in the cycle lanes.
5. In an attempt to tackle the issue of drivers being able to avoid the cushions and hence not being forced to slow down a decision was taken to instead use a three cushion layout with an understanding that drivers would be expected to cross briefly into the advisory cycle lanes whilst negotiating the cushions.
6. Since the installation of these two sets of speed-cushions council officers have received complaints from members of the public about the potential danger to cyclists from drivers veering into the advisory cycle lanes to negotiate the outer cushions. These complaints have included reports of near-misses between vehicles and cyclists. There are no recorded casualties at either set of cushions since they were installed.
7. Officers have also received complaints from residents living in the properties adjacent to both sets of cushions about vibration and, in one case, alleged damage to their property as a result of vehicles passing over the cushions.
8. In an attempt to tackle both the issues mentioned above officers are proposing to trial some alternative traffic calming layouts to determine whether there is a more appropriate solution available in these locations.
9. The first proposed layout (shown in Annex B) incorporates a ramp in each cycle lane, similar in profile to a standard speed table, and a standard-sized speed cushion in each vehicle lane. The second proposed layout (shown in Annex C) would again have a standard-sized speed cushion in each vehicle lane but would segregate the cycle lane from the vehicle lane through the use of a rubber divider strip which would incorporate short plastic bollards (wands). Examples of divider strips and wands in operation are shown in Annex D. In both of the above layouts it is proposed to convert a short section of the current advisory cycle lane to a mandatory cycle lane to further discourage any encroachment by drivers into the lane.

10. To avoid having to undertake multiple trials using different layouts officers are proposing to trial a different layout at each of the sites. The success (or not) of each layout would then be evaluated and the results brought back to a future decision session for approval to either replace the existing triple speed-cushion arrangements with a new type of layout or to reinstate the current layouts.
11. If, as a result of the proposed trial, an alternative layout can be identified which slows drivers down, reduces the potential for conflict between drivers and cyclists and reduces the vibration experienced by adjacent property-owners then it may be possible to introduce this at other sites across York where there are similar triple speed-cushion layouts, if deemed appropriate.

### **Consultation**

12. If the trial is approved by the Executive Member it is proposed to undertake internal consultation with relevant Council officers, Ward Members and Party Spokespersons as part of the trial evaluation process. External consultation will also be undertaken with local residents, the school, the Parish Council and other statutory consultees.

### **Options**

13. There are four options available to the Executive Member:  
Option 1 : Undertake a 3-month trial replacement of the 3-cushion layouts with a different layout at each location.  
Option 2 : Undertake two separate 3-month trials to replace the 3-cushion layouts using a different type of layout for each trial.  
Option 3 : Retain the current 3-cushion layouts and investigate alternative methods to reduce vibration and reduce potential conflict between drivers and cyclists.  
Option 4 : Do nothing

### **Analysis of Options**

14. Option 1 : The main advantage of this option is that it enables two different layouts to be trialled simultaneously and reduces the period of time over which the trial takes place and the ultimate solution identified. The cost of the trial will also be less than for Option 2 as only one set of each layout needs to be funded initially. Evaluation of the effectiveness of each layout will be done using the same traffic volume and composition therefore enabling a direct comparison to be made. The advantage over Options 3 and 4 is that vehicles will be pushed further away from the adjacent properties and as a result vibration levels should be reduced. The disadvantage of this option is that drivers may

potentially behave differently when passing through two different layouts than they would if the two sites had the same layout.

15. Option 2 : The advantage of this option over Option 1 is that it should replicate how drivers would behave when passing through the new layouts at both sites. As per Option 1, the advantage over Options 3 and 4 is that vehicles will be pushed further away from the adjacent properties and as a result vibration levels should be reduced. The disadvantages compared to Option 1 are that the trial period would be twice as long and would delay a decision as to the ultimate solution by at least three months. The trial will cost more than Option 1 as two sets of each solution will need to be purchased. During the evaluation stage when comparing the two types of layout the traffic volumes and composition will be slightly different.
16. Option 3 : The advantage of this option over Options 1 and 2 is that it potentially doesn't involve a trial therefore may be quicker to implement if a solution can be identified. However it is considered unlikely that Officers will be able to identify a suitable, more cost effective solution, to tackle the vibration and conflict issues.
17. Option 4 : The main advantage of this option is that there is potentially no cost involved, however, this option would not resolve the concerns which have been raised about perceived conflicts between cyclists and vehicles or vibration in the area.

## **Council Plan**

18. Considering this matter contributes to the following Council corporate priorities, as set out in the Council Plan 2015-19:

### *A prosperous city for all*

- *Efficient and affordable transport links enable residents and businesses to access key services and opportunities* – cycling is one of the cheapest forms of travel, the reduced potential for conflict between drivers and cyclists will encourage cycling along this transport corridor and will help the school to achieve its' travel plan targets.
- *Environmental sustainability underpins everything we do* – cycling is one of the most sustainable forms of transport and has the potential to reduce emission levels along this transport corridor if people choose to switch from vehicles to cycles.
- *Visitors, businesses and residents are impressed with the quality of our city* – improvements to the cycle route network will benefit residents and may make a positive contribution to business

travel plans. Reduced vibration levels to adjacent properties will improve the residents' quality of life.

#### A focus on frontline services

- *All York's residents live and thrive in a city which allows them to contribute fully to their communities and neighbourhoods* – improvements to the cycle route facilities help reduce the severance effects caused by busy roads helping to link people up better to the destinations they wish to reach.
- *Everyone has access to opportunities regardless of their background* – cycling is a great leveller as it doesn't discriminate by sex or ethnic origin. Cycle lane improvements can only encourage more people from all backgrounds to cycle.
- *Every child has the opportunity to get the best possible start in life* – child cyclists are one of the most vulnerable groups of road users and improvements to the cycle lanes in the immediate vicinity of a secondary school should encourage more to cycle which will have added health benefits.
- *Residents are encouraged and supported to live healthily* – cycling is good for residents' health therefore anything which encourages more people to cycle more often can only be a positive.
- *Residents are protected from harm, with a low risk of crime* – the proposed option reduces the potential for conflict between drivers and cyclists.

#### A council that listens to residents

- *Focus on cost and efficiency to make the right decisions in a challenging financial environment* – measures to reduce the vibration associated with the current traffic-calming should reduce the potential for future third party insurance claims from owners of adjacent properties.
- *Celebrate and champion the diversity of our population and encourage everyone to play an active role in the city* – Cycling is an activity that the majority of residents can enjoy, improving cycling facilities has the potential to encourage more people to get active.

### Implications

19. **Financial** : The costs associated with the proposed trial and any subsequent replacement infrastructure can be accommodated from the 2017/18 Transport Capital Programme.
20. **Equalities** : The reduction of the potential for conflict between drivers and cyclists should help to encourage more people to cycle.

21. There are no Human Resources, Legal, Information Technology, Crime and Disorder, Property or Other implications.

## Risk Management

22. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy there are no risks associated with the recommendations in this report.

## Contact Details

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**Report Approved**



**Date** 02.05.17

**Wards Affected:** Huntington and New Earswick

**All**

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:** None

**Annexes:**

**Annex A** – Current triple speed-cushion layout

**Annex B** – Proposed trial layout using two speed-cushions and ramps within the cycle lanes

**Annex C** – Proposed trial layout using two speed-cushions and divider strips between the vehicle and cycle lanes

**Annex D** – Example of divider strip/wand layout