



# Northumberland County Council

ASHINGTON & BLYTH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

DATE: 12 SEPTEMBER 2018

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PETITION REQUESTING TRAFFIC CALMING ON PLESSEY ROAD, BLYTH

**Report of the Interim Executive Director of Place, Paul Johnston**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Glen Sanderson, Environment and Local Services**

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## **Purpose of report**

To acknowledge the petition recently received requesting traffic calming on Plessey Road in Blyth.

## **Introduction**

1. A petition of 181 signatures has been received requesting traffic calming on Plessey Road in Blyth.
2. The petition states: *"We the undersigned are very concerned about the speed of traffic up our street and the disrespect shown by some drivers to residents. In the light of the serious accident witnessed today (9/7/18), we feel strongly that our concerns be heeded and met. Our street encompasses Patterson House (sheltered accommodation for the elderly); shops; a post office and convenience store; access to Croftway School, as well as residential dwellings. Today's accident could have caused much greater chaos had pedestrians been involved.*

*We request that the Council and Road Traffic Authorities heed our concerns and react in everyone's best interests."*

A covering letter submitted with the petition giving further background to the issue is attached in Appendix A.

## **Background**

4. The section of Plessey Road referred to in the petition is east of Rotary Way. Although it is primarily residential in nature, it includes shops, a post office, local businesses, public houses, sheltered accommodation and is a bus route. For much of its length it is a 'B' class road (B1327), within the Northumberland County Council

roads hierarchy it is classified as a Major Link Road which means that in built up areas it is a significant generator of traffic. As well as those facilities fronting the road, nearby destinations include Croftway School, the Phoenix Theatre, Blyth Spartans football ground and Blyth Town Centre. This means it carries a significant amount of through traffic. It's location is shown in Figure 1.

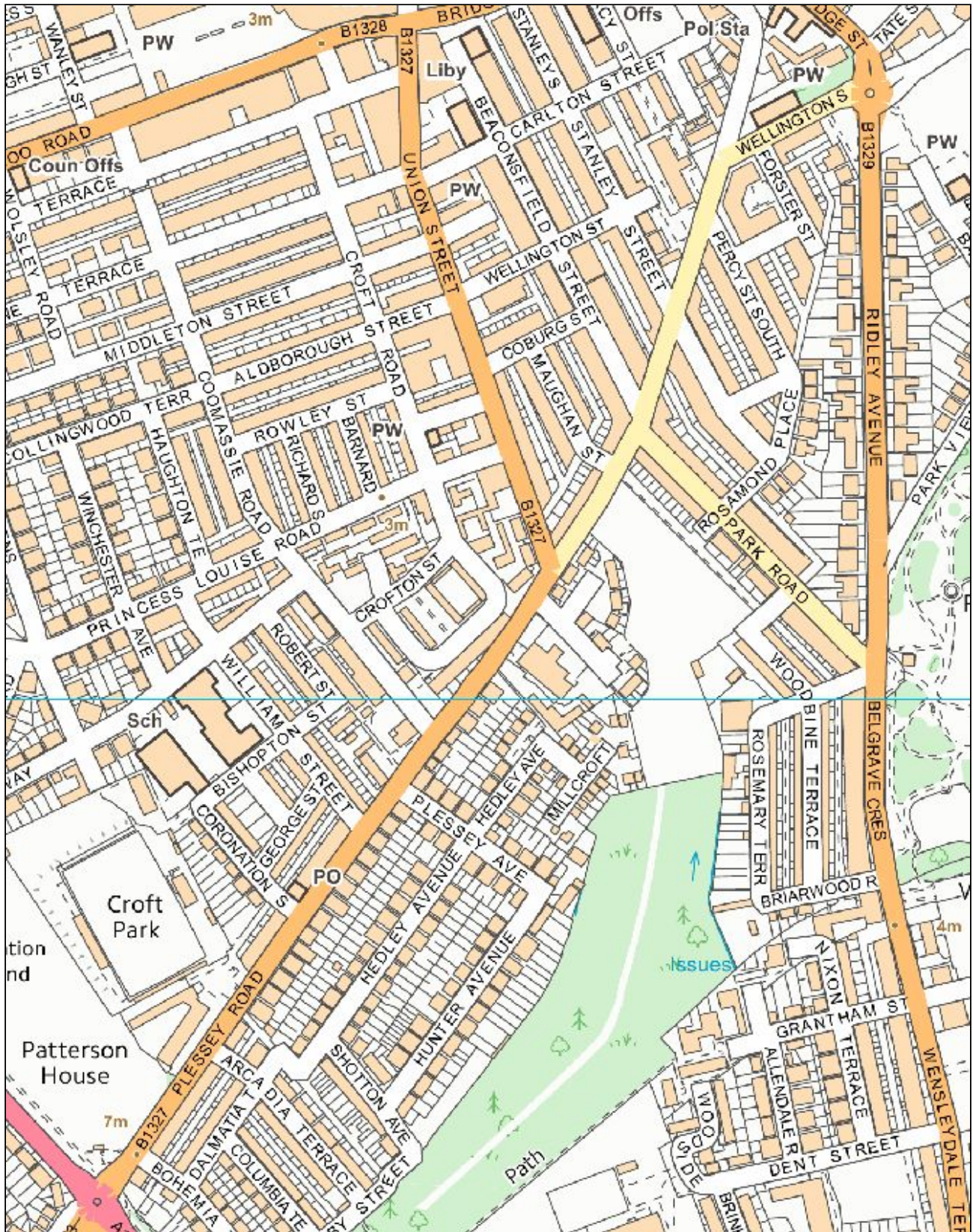


Fig.1. Plessey Road Location Plan.

5. The majority of properties on Plessey Road do not have off-street parking, so residents park on-street. This parking reduces the available carriageway width which should in turn reduce traffic speeds slightly.
6. The most recent speed survey was carried out in 2015 near the junction with Stanley Street. At that time, the average speeds recorded were 22 mph southbound and 24 mph northbound. The 85th percentile speeds which are used by the Police to determine whether enforcement action is necessary were 26.5mph southbound and 29.8mph northbound. These figures do not meet the Police threshold for enforcement action.
7. A new speed survey has been ordered close to the Post Office to gather up to date speed information from a location identified in the petition as significant. This information will help inform considerations about what speed reducing measures may be necessary or appropriate.
8. In recent years, five personal injury accidents have been recorded on this section of Plessey Road. Four of these resulted in 'slight' injuries, while one was classed as 'serious'. These accidents all occurred between 2013 and 2016 with no further recorded injury accidents since. All five incidents occurred in different locations.
9. The petition refers to a recent accident that occurred on 9th July this year. The County Council has yet to formally receive the details of this incident from the Police. It will, however, be taken into account when considering the issues.
10. The Council has received previous requests for a pedestrian crossing to be located outside the Post Office. A Pedestrian/Vehicle survey was carried out in 2014 which found that a crossing was justified, however, the zig zag markings associated with the crossing would reduce the amount of parking space available for residents. The proposal was not taken forward at the time as it was not considered a priority locally for the Local Transport Plan Programme. The survey does suggest, however, that the number of pedestrians in the area is significant.
11. The local ward Member is aware of the concerns and is actively considering what measures could be taken to assist.

### **Potential Solutions**

12. Various forms of traffic calming can be considered to achieve a reduction in vehicle speeds. Physical traffic calming measures can be provided either as full-width speed humps, or speed cushions which allow passage by large vehicles which may otherwise become grounded on full-width humps. This is a consideration on Plessey Road which is a bus route.
13. Alternatively, chicanes or build-outs could be provided to deflect vehicles away from the current straight line route and reduce the road width at certain points. This could include a 'give way to oncoming vehicles' system. This type of measure would, however, result in a reduction in the amount of parking space available.

14. 'Quick-sett' style rumble strips could also be considered. However, experience has demonstrated that the noise created is likely to be unpopular in a residential street.

15. Some examples of these different types of traffic calming are shown in Figure 2.

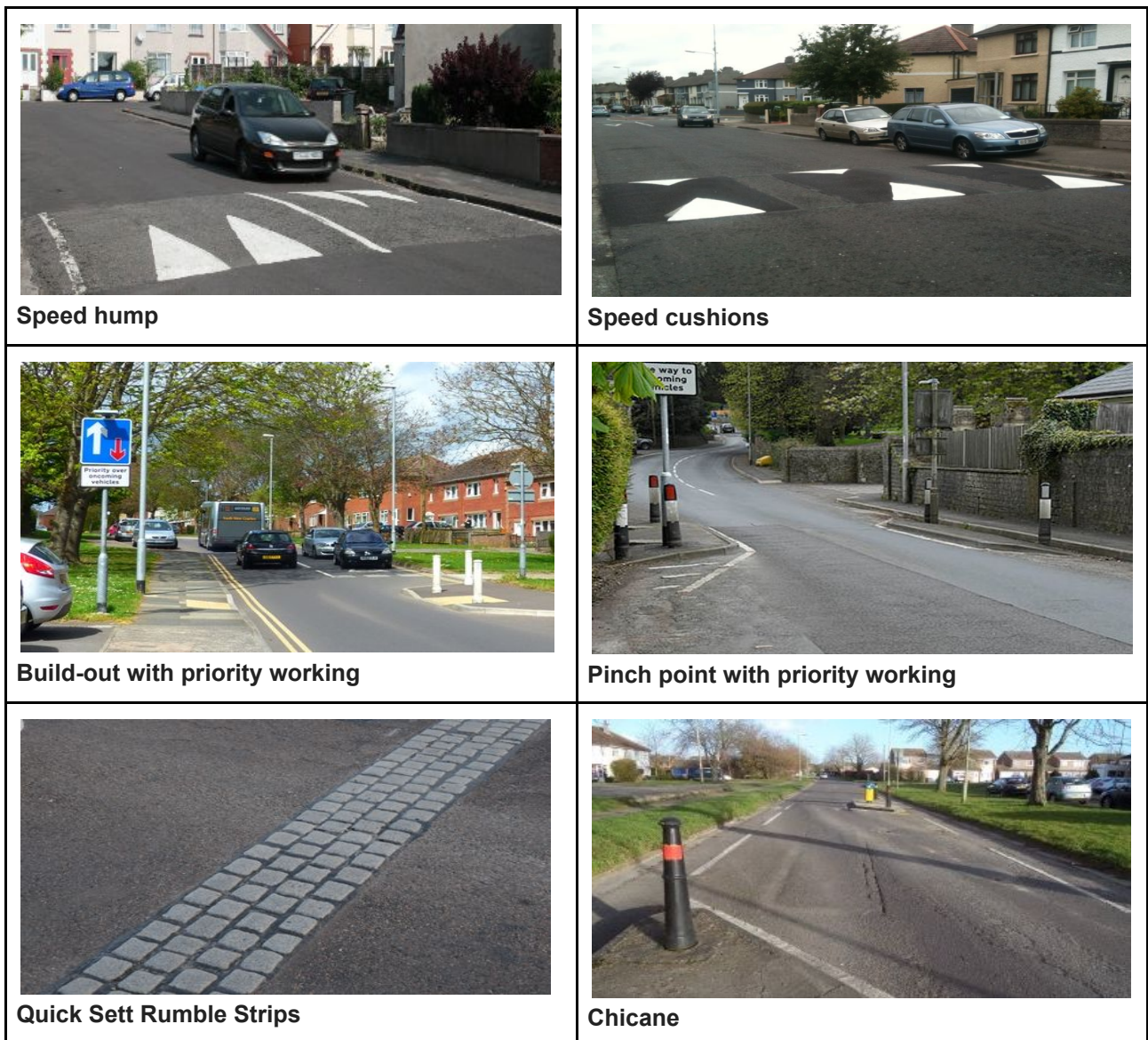


Figure 2. Examples of Traffic Calming Measures

## **Recommendations**

- 1) The Local Area Council notes the issues raised in the petition.
- 2) The issues be considered as part of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Programme preparation for next year's Integrated Transport Programme.
- 3) If included in the LTP Programme, a number of different options for potential traffic calming measures be set out for consideration by residents, the local ward member and Blyth Town Council.

## **Implications**

<b>Policy</b>	The response to the issues raised in this petition is consistent with LTP Policies.
<b>Finance and value for money</b>	Local Transport Plan funding will be required to implement any traffic calming measures.
<b>Legal</b>	None
<b>Procurement</b>	None
<b>Human Resources</b>	None
<b>Property</b>	None
<b>Equalities</b> (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	None
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	None
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder</b>	None
<b>Customer Consideration</b>	Residents and statutory consultees will be consulted on any proposed measures.
<b>Carbon reduction</b>	None
<b>Wards</b>	Wensleydale

## **Background papers:**

None

## **Report sign off**

	initials
Finance Officer	n/a
Monitoring Officer/Legal	n/a
Human Resources	n/a
Procurement	n/a
I.T.	n/a
Director	PJ
Portfolio Holder(s)	GS

## **Author and Contact Details**

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## Appendix A

### Petition Covering Letter

To Whom It May Concern,

I know that residents living in the Plessey Road area surrounding the Post Office/ Convenience Store have voiced concerns in the past regarding speeding vehicles on our street. The road is very narrow, many houses without garages or drives, forcing residents to park on the street to offload or collect. Many residents also need to park their cars there day and night. Customers to the Post Office are frequent since only two Post Offices service the whole of Blyth. This includes P.O. vans and deliveries. Buses travel this busy street four times an hour. Patterson House, a sheltered residence, is also on this road, as are shops and residents. The road is also used twice daily for children and parents attending Croftway School. A lollipop warden is no longer in evidence. It is a very busy road with many pedestrians of all ages.

Our primary concern is the speed at which many cars travel along this busy route. Wing mirrors fly by daily! Parked cars are scratched and garden walls are regularly dismantled. Brakes screech daily and crossing the road for pedestrians is a nightmare. There are no signs to caution drivers, to remind them of their speed or to deter them in any way. We have no zebra crossing for schoolchildren / adults. The convenience store now has a cash machine which has increased the amount of traffic in the area. We have all been aware of 'accidents waiting to happen'.

Today (9/7/18) an accident occurred resulting in an upturned car, two garden walls destroyed and a parked car written off. Fire engines, police and ambulance were in attendance. The cause of the accident is unknown at present but it has served as a reminder of the potential chaos it could have caused in such a built-up area. As such, the community has decided to band together to share their concerns with the relevant authorities in the hope that something can be done to deter speeders and disrespectful drivers.

I am enclosing a petition signed by the residents of Plessey Road (Post Office area). I hope our concerns will be addressed. We await a positive response.

Thank you.