



Northumberland

County Council

CASTLE MORPETH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL

DATE: 9TH MAY 2022

PETITION – REQUEST FOR A REDUCED SPEED LIMIT AND SAFER CROSSING FACILITY ON MORPETH NORTHERN BYPASS BETWEEN NORTHGATE ROUNDABOUT AND ST GEORGES ROUNDABOUT

Report of: Service Director - Local Services, Paul Jones

Cabinet Member: John Riddle, Environment and Local Services

Purpose of report

To respond to the petition which was delivered to County Hall in March 2022 regarding road safety concerns on the Morpeth Northern Bypass.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Local Area Council note the content of this report and support the actions proposed.

Link to Corporate Plan

How - “We want to be efficient, open and work for everyone”

Enjoying - “We want you to love where you live”

Connecting - “We want you to have access to the things you need”

Key Issues

1. A petition has been received raising road safety concerns for pedestrians crossing the Morpeth Northern Bypass near the Northgate Roundabout.
2. The petition requests a reduced speed limit between the Northgate Roundabout and St George’s roundabout, and a safer crossing point.
3. The petition has been signed by 325 signatories.
4. A safe route to school assessment will be carried out. This will identify any improvements which may be required to improve the safety of the routes to the various schools in Morpeth, in particular at the existing crossing point at the Northgate Roundabout.
5. Consideration will be given to a reduced speed limit if this is deemed appropriate following the safe route to school assessment.

Background

The Petition

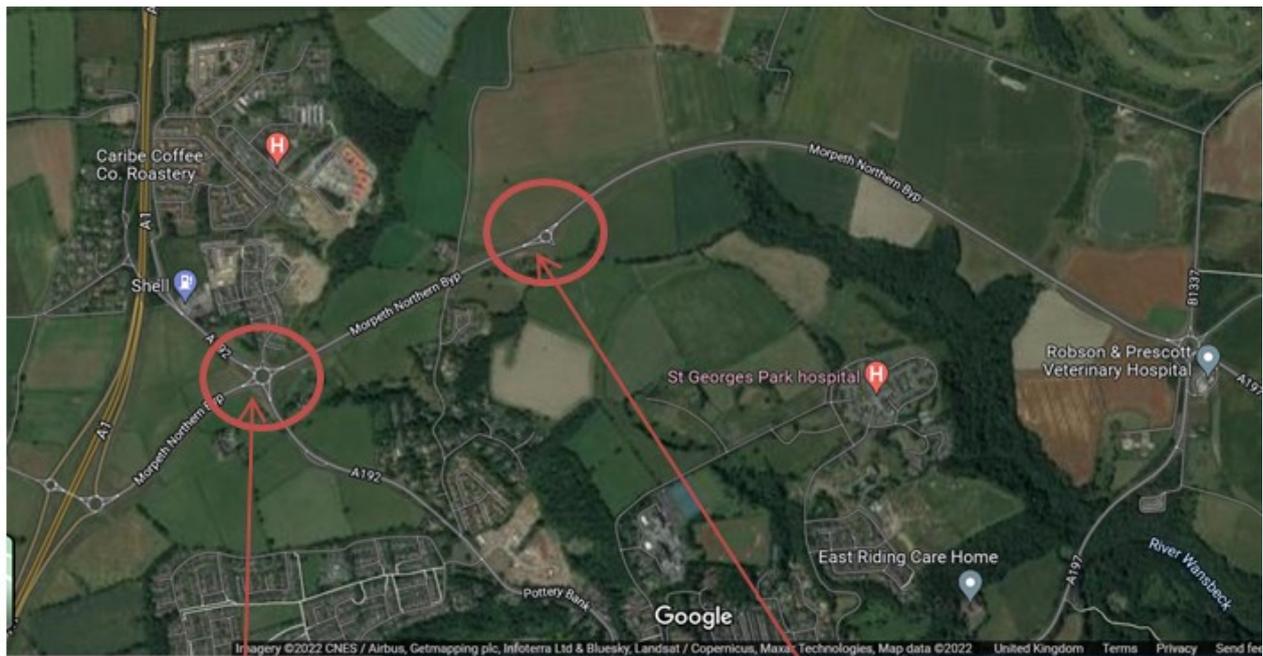
The County Council has received a 325-name petition stating that :-

“Parents are concerned about the crossing on the bypass road between St George’s roundabout and Northgate roundabout as being dangerous for school children to cross on a daily basis on their way to and from school

We are asking that the speed limit along that part of the bypass be reduced and also a safer crossing point than the current one is considered.

There are in excess of 500 houses across the two estates. In addition, with the Northgate Hospital site expanding and an extra 400 extra staff working on the site (which incidentally will increase the number of people using this crossing as patients go out with staff), plus plans for over 800 houses off the St George’s roundabout, traffic along the bypass road both in and out of Morpeth and onto the A1 will increase dramatically.

Parents already think this is dangerous and it's only a matter of time before someone is hurt or worse”.



Northgate Roundabout

St George’s Roundabout

Plan showing Morpeth Northern Bypass

Comments

Northumberland County Council would like to thank the lead petitioner for their work in putting the petition together, we sympathise with the issues raised and understand concerns with regards to vehicles speeds and the fact that further housing development is planned.

The Morpeth Northern Bypass opened in April 2017 and adjacent housing to the north of it has developed further since this time. A 30mph speed limit is currently in place in the village of Fairmoor which lies to the north of the Northgate roundabout, with the speed limit on the bypass and around the Northgate roundabout being derestricted 60mph. This also includes the Fennel Way access to The Meadows housing estate which joins the roundabout.

While a safer crossing point has been requested, each leg of the Northgate Roundabout does have existing splitter islands. These already offer a safe crossing point for pedestrians. These features should also assist in controlling vehicle speeds.

A pedestrian vehicle survey was carried out in May 2021 and this highlighted that the crossing is well used. The existing crossing points would be considered adequate for such a crossing. However, given that the petition focusses on the safety of children travelling to and from school, a safe route to school assessment will be carried out. This will identify any improvements which may be required to improve the safety of the routes to the various schools in Morpeth, with particular focus being at the existing crossing point nearest The Meadows estate.

This assessment may suggest that improved traffic signs and road markings are required, while consideration will also be given to whether or not a reduced speed limit is appropriate.



Splitter Island off Northgate Roundabout (heading to St George's Roundabout)

Accident Data

According to accident casualty data from Northumbria Police, since the Morpeth Northern Bypass opened there have been no personal injury accidents at Northgate Roundabout. There have been two personal injury collisions on the overall length between Northgate Roundabout and St Georges Roundabout, including the roundabouts themselves. These

both occurred at St George's Roundabout, one was "serious" and one "slight". None of the collisions involved pedestrians.

Proposed Actions

- A) A safe route to school assessment to be carried out. This will identify any improvements which may be required to improve the safety of the routes to the various schools in Morpeth, in particular at the existing crossing point at the Northgate Roundabout.
- B) A speed survey will be arranged to assess actual vehicle speeds.
- C) As part of the safe routes to school assessment, consideration will be given to whether a reduced speed limit would be appropriate.

Implications

Policy	The response to the issues raised in this petition is consistent with LTP Policies.
Finance and value for money	n/a
Legal	None
Procurement	None
Human Resources	None
Property	None
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	None
Risk Assessment	n/a
Crime Disorder &	Driving at excessive speed is an offence which is only enforceable by the police.

Customer Consideration	Petition identifies various road safety issues, notably during school run times for school children crossing the road
Carbon reduction	n/a
Health and Wellbeing	Petition raises issues regarding road safety due to traffic speeds and road crossing.
Wards	Pegswood

Background papers:

None

Report sign off

	Full Name of Officer
Monitoring Officer/Legal	N/A
Executive Director of Finance & S151 Officer	N/A
Relevant Executive Director	Rob Murfin
Chief Executive	N/A
Portfolio Holder(s)	John Riddle

Author and Contact Details

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