

# TYNEDALE LOCAL AREA COUNCIL DATE: 15TH MARCH 2022

# PETITION - B6305 ALLENDALE ROAD, HEXHAM

**Report of: Service Director - Local Services, Paul Jones** 

Cabinet Member: John Riddle

#### Purpose of report

To respond to the petition which was presented to Tynedale Local Area Council on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022, regarding road safety on B6305 Allendale Road, Hexham

#### 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 concerns that Allendale Road "is unsafe and a death trap waiting to happen".
- 2. This online petition has been signed by 689 signatories.
- 3. The petition states that "Allendale Road has a serious issue with speeding drivers, poor road conditions, poor footpath conditions and a new footfall of 1800 children now needing to use these paths to access the new Hexham Middle School and Queen Elizabeth High School site which has just been built".
- 4. The petition requested that speed surveys be undertaken. A total of eight speed surveys have since been carried out at regular intervals along Allendale Road, between Southlands and the Fox Public House. The surveys were in place from 23<sup>rd</sup> November to 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021 and recorded vehicle numbers and speeds at all times during this period.

- 5. According to accident data from Northumbria Police there have been no personal injury collisions associated with the journey to and from school throughout the area highlighted in the previous five years. This does not include any damage only incidents or near misses which may have occurred.
- 6. The existing "Variable 20mph Speed Limit" was enhanced prior to the new school site opening in September 2021 as part of its planning conditions and "Advisory 20 when lights flash" signage has also been introduced. We do however recognise that road safety is a concern at all times of the day and not solely focussed on the school run.
- 7. We note the issues raised in the Petition. We will be undertaking some preliminary design work to look at potential solutions which could be considered for inclusion in a future Local Transport Plan (LTP) Programme. This may include consideration of physical traffic calming measures which were requested through the petition.
- 8. Concerns regarding the clearing of the footpath, and the cutting back of overhanging vegetation and thorns have already been addressed. We will also request to Neighbourhood Services that Allendale Road is regularly inspected, to ensure the maximum footpath width continues to be available for use.
- 9. We will continue to work with the school to ensure that the preferred pedestrian route as identified in the School Travel plan continues to be encouraged and promoted.

## Background

## The Petition

The County Council has received a 689 name petition stating that :-

"We want Northumberland County Council to stand up and listen to us residents once and for all.

"Allendale Road is unsafe and is a death trap waiting to happen. We have a serious issue with speeding drivers, poor road conditions, poor path conditions and a new footfall of 1800 children now needing to use these paths to access the new Hexham Middle School and Queen Elizabeth High School site that you have just built. The safety aspect of the road has been ignored for many years".

"We feel let down that the safety on this road has been overlooked for many years and residents' concerns have been pushed aside. We do not want to wait to see a child or adult killed on this road. We want something to be done now.

"We request in the first instance speed monitoring be put on intervals along Allendale Road from above Southlands down to the Fox Pub. In light of the findings which I'm sure will prove astounding to see what an issue there is. We ask for traffic calming measures put in place including some form of path barrier to safeguard children, regular path clearing and thorn trimming to stop pedestrians having to step on the road to avoid these. "You have built an amazing school, now safeguard the children that are going there and make the pathways and roads around the school a safe place for them to walk whether it is day or night.

"It is not just children that use the road and we also have to take into account dog walkers and pedestrians that use the paths regularly during the dark. Wide vehicles passing swerve towards the path and could easily clip someone on the path. This just is not safe. We are petrified."

## **Initial Comments**

Northumberland County Council would like to thank the lead petitioner for their work in putting the petition together. We note the issues raised. We will be undertaking some preliminary design work to look at potential solutions which could be considered for inclusion in a future Local Transport Plan (LTP) Programme. This may include consideration of physical traffic calming measures which have been requested.

From a Highways perspective, Allendale Road is identified as a part of the Resilient Road Network that maintain economic activity and will be prioritised to be kept open in times of severe weather. As such it is expected that this route would be able to take HGV traffic. Both the carriageway and the footway are relatively narrow and the overall width of highway is constrained by properties to either side.

However, we do appreciate that Allendale Road is also a residential street meaning access to and from individual properties is required at all times, as well as it being a busy pedestrian route. We also recognise that the footpath is generally narrower than current standards, which undoubtedly leads to pedestrians feeling intimidated when HGVs travel past them.

Unfortunately, it is likely to be difficult to improve the width of the existing footways due to physical and land constraints. This also means that the provision of a pedestrian barrier is unlikely to be a practical solution. Already pedestrians travelling in opposite directions on Allendale Road often need to move into the road to pass each other. Should a barrier be in place this manoeuvre would be impossible.

## Accident Data

According to accident data from Northumbria Police, there have been no personal injury collisions associated with the journey to and from school throughout the section of Allendale Road between Southlands and the Fox Public House in the previous five years.

We are aware a serious personal injury collision did occur on the B6305 to the west of Southlands (to the west of the area being highlighted in the petition), in September 2021 during the school end of day journey period. This occurred at 16:20 on a Monday afternoon. The police description of the accident indicates that a car travelling west has been blinded by the low sun causing the driver to collide with two cars which were travelling east.

A further slight personal injury collision also occurred at the Allendale Road / B6531 junction in June 2021. This occurred at 22:15 on a Wednesday night and involved a

collision with a cyclist and car, resulting in the cyclist falling from their bike, sustaining a slight injury to their arm.

It should be noted that Northumbria Police only record details of injury accidents and we are unable to provide any information on any damage only incidents, or any near misses which may have occurred.

## Speed Surveys

As requested, we have carried out speed surveys at regular intervals on Allendale Road. A total of eight surveys were set up to record vehicles numbers and speed of traffic from 23rd November to 1st December 2021. Data was recorded at all times during this period.

A summary of the data obtained is attached as Appendix A, together with a map showing the approximate location of each of these surveys. Included in the summary is data on school run times only, as well as the overall 24 hour data.

Based on the results obtained, overall, it would appear that there is some speeding concern within the more rural 30mph limit to the west of the school (between Southlands and the property known as Woodley Field - surveys 1-3). Data obtained nearer the school (within the variable 20mph and advisory 20 when lights flash extents – surveys 4-8) suggests that traffic is moving at an acceptable speed when considering 24 hour data only. However, traffic in general does appear to be travelling at slightly excessive speed during the school run considering a variable 20mph speed limit is in place, as well as advisory 20 when lights flash signage, with a small number of vehicles travelling at higher speeds.

It should be noted that the variable 20mph speed limit does have a Traffic Regulation Order, and as such can be enforced by the police. We will forward a copy of the survey data onto the Road Safety Unit at Northumbria Police, and they may decide to investigate further, and consider any appropriate enforcement measures.

## **Camera Surveys**

Three camera surveys have also been carried out following receipt of the petition. The images below do highlight the narrow footpath and the volume of large vehicles using the route during the school run could be concerning to pedestrians. In addition, when two HGVs are travelling in opposite directions this is extremely tight, increasing the levels of concern to pedestrians.

The data obtained clearly highlights the problem residents and all users face on a daily basis, and why they are naturally concerned. Given the narrow widths and the needs for traffic including HGVs to use this route it is felt that the key measure to improve road safety would be to reduce traffic speeds.





## **Observations made during Site Visits**

Many site visits have been undertaken before and since receipt of the petition, and it is clear that the narrow footpath width is of concern at some points. Officers have witnessed pedestrians travelling in opposite directions often needing to move into the road to pass each other, often without looking or being distracted by their mobile phones. This supports our decision to allocate funding for some preliminary design work to identify potential solutions to improve road safety on Allendale Road.

Congestion caused by eastbound traffic queuing at the Allendale Road junction when lights are on red has also been highlighted as another potential issue.

## School Travel Plan

The School Travel Plan for the new school site, dated September 2019, acknowledges that although there is an extensive network of footways in the vicinity of the site and within Hexham, many of these are generally narrower than current standards. Because it was not considered possible to improve the width of existing footways due to physical and land constraints, one of the conditions of the new school planning application was to extend the length of the 20mph speed limit which already operated at school start and finish time. The agreed scheme to extend the length of the 20mph speed limit was introduced prior to the school opening in September 2021.

With regard to walking routes, the School Travel Plan associated with the planning permission acknowledged that, as the pedestrian access to the school was moved further north along Whetstone Bridge Road, the quickest pedestrian route from the Temperley Place / Allendale Road signal junction would be via Alexandra Terrace / Tynedale Terrace. Therefore the School Travel Plan states that "As Allendale Road, from the signal control junction with Temperley Place, has a narrow footway, use of Burnland Terrace and Leazes Terrace will be promoted as the preferred pedestrian route"

This is seen as a key measure, as reducing the number of pedestrians using the footway along Allendale Road will significantly reduce risks. We will be raising this issue with the school to ensure that the preferred walking route is being promoted and encouraged regularly.

## **Proposed Actions**

- A) Funding has already been allocated to carrying out some preliminary design work which would consider potential options to improve road safety on Allendale Road. These could then be considered for inclusion in a future Local Transport Plan (LTP) Programme. This may include appropriate physical traffic calming measures as requested through the petition.
- B) Remind the school they need to publicise and encourage the use of the preferred walking route.
- C) A copy of the petition and report to be forwarded to the Road Safety Unit at Northumbria Police for further investigation and any appropriate enforcement action deemed necessary.
- D) Concerns regarding the clearing of the footpath, and the cutting back of overhanging vegetation and thorns have already been addressed. We will request Neighbourhood Services to ensure that Allendale Road is regularly inspected, to ensure the maximum footway width is available for use.

## Implications

Policy	The response to the issues raised in this petition is consistent with LTP Policies.
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Finance and value for money	Preliminary design to be funded through 2021/22 Local Transport Plan.
Legal	None
Procurement	None
Human Resources	None
Property	None
Equalities	None
(Impact Assessment attached)	
Yes □ No □ N/A ⊠	
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 along this route, notably during school run times which puts school children of all ages at potential risk
Carbon reduction	n/a
Wards	Hexham West

## Appendix Index

Appendix A – Summary of speed survey data and plan of locations

## Background papers:

Link to petition:-

https://www.change.org/p/leader-of-northumberland-county-council-councillor-glensanderson-allendale-road-is-unsafe-and-needs-changes-now

Link to School Travel Plan:https://publicaccess.northumberland.gov.uk/onlineapplications/files/B10F1B985351D7FE25B3CA13B9589766/pdf/19\_03998\_CCD-TRAVEL\_PLAN-1496058.pdf

## 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**

Neil Snowdon – Principal Programme Officer (Highways Improvement Team)

# Appendix A – Speed Survey Results

Eastbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 – 09:00	171	35.5mph	30.8mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
09:00 - 10:00	125	36.7mph	31.7mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
14:00 – 15:00	117	36.9mph	31.5mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
15:00 - 16:00	112	37.2mph	31.8mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
16:00 - 17:00	106	36.2mph	31.3mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
24 Hour Period	1467	36.8	31.6mph	46 – 51mph (16 vehicles)
Westbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 - 09:00	180	25.9mph	21.7mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
09:00 - 10:00	162	27.8mph	24.5mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
14:00 - 15:00	191	27.8mph	24.3mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
15:00 - 16:00	248	26.6mph	23mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
16:00 - 17:00	237	26.8mph	23.7mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
24 Hour Period	1426	36.8mph	31.4mph	51 – 56mph (1 vehicle)

Site 1 – Shaws Lane (30mph limit only)

Eastbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 - 09:00	185	31.1mph	28.1mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
09:00 - 10:00	142	30.9mph	28.2mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
14:00 - 15:00	128	31.5mph	28.5mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
15:00 - 16:00	117	32mph	28.4mph	36 – 41mph (4 vehicles)
16:00 - 17:00	124	31.9mph	28.2mph	41 – 46mph (1 vehicle)
24 Hour Period	1636	31.7mph	28.5mph	46 – 51mph (3 vehicles)
Westbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 - 09:00	92	35.8mph	30.6mph	41 – 46mph (2 vehicles)
09:00 - 10:00	102	35.8mph	30.1mph	41 – 46mph (3 vehicles)
14:00 - 15:00	119	35.1mph	30.2mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
15:00 - 16:00	150	34.3mph	29.2mph	41 – 46mph (3 vehicles)
16:00 - 17:00	138	35mph	30.1mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
24 Hour Period	1551	35.7mph	30.4mph	51 – 56mph (2 vehicles)

Eastbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 – 09:00	183	33.7mph	30.3mph	41 – 46mph (2 vehicles)
09:00 - 10:00	138	34.1mph	30.4mph	41 – 46mph (2 vehicles)
14:00 - 15:00	130	34.6mph	30.6mph	41 – 46mph (1 vehicle)
15:00 - 16:00	123	34.9mph	30.7mph	41 – 46mph (2 vehicles)
16:00 - 17:00	116	34.5mph	30.6mph	41 – 46mph (1 vehicle)
24 Hour Period	1606	34.7mph	30.8mph	41 – 46mph (27 vehicles)
Westbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 – 09:00	96	37.8mph	32.6mph	51 – 56mph (1 vehicle)
09:00 - 10:00	108	37.4mph	32mph	46 – 51mph (1 vehicle)
14:00 - 15:00	131	37.7mph	32.2mph	46 – 51mph (2 vehicles)
15:00 – 16:00	156	36.9mph	31.6mph	46 – 51mph (2 vehicles)
16:00 - 17:00	154	37.1mph	31.9mph	46 – 51mph (2 vehicles)
24 Hour Period	1651	38.1mph	32.6mph	51 – 56mph (3 vehicles)

Site 3 – Woodley Field (30mph limit only)

Eastbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 – 09:00	193	31.5mph	28.1mph	36 – 41mph (4 vehicles)
09:00 - 10:00	151	32.3mph	28.7mph	36 – 41mph (4 vehicles)
14:00 - 15:00	135	32.7mph	29mph	36 – 41mph (5 vehicles)
15:00 - 16:00	126	32.7mph	28.8mph	41 – 46mph (1 vehicle)
16:00 - 17:00	135	32.4mph	29mph	41 – 46mph (1 vehicle)
24 Hour Period	1740	32.6mph	29.1mph	46 – 51mph (2 vehicles)
Westbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 – 09:00	94	33.3mph	29.8mph	41 – 46mph (1 vehicle)
09:00 - 10:00	107	33.2mph	29.6mph	41 – 46mph (1 vehicle)
14:00 – 15:00	122	33.4mph	29.8mph	41 – 46mph (2 vehicles)
15:00 – 16:00	155	32.8mph	29mph	41 – 46mph (1 vehicle)
16:00 - 17:00	144	33.6mph	30mph	41 – 46mph (1 vehicle)
24 Hour Period	1594	33.8mph	30.2mph	51 – 56mph (1 vehicle)

Site 4 – Milestone House (30mph limit only)

Eastbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 - 09:00	186	27.3mph	23.1mph	31 – 36mph (4 vehicles)
09:00 - 10:00	143	28.2mph	24.4mph	31 – 36mph (5 vehicles)
14:00 - 15:00	131	28.2mph	24.4mph	31 – 36mph (5 vehicles)
15:00 - 16:00	126	27.6mph	23.5mph	31 – 36mph (4 vehicles)
16:00 - 17:00	122	27.7mph	24.2mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
24 Hour Period	1653	28.3mph	24.6mph	36 – 41mph (8 vehicles)
Westbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 - 09:00	89	30.9mph	25.9mph	36 – 41mph (2 vehicles)
09:00 - 10:00	105	31.5mph	26.8mph	36 – 41mph (3 vehicles)
14:00 - 15:00	126	31.8mph	26.9mph	36 – 41mph (4 vehicles)
15:00 - 16:00	155	31mph	25.6mph	36 – 41mph (4 vehicles)
16:00 - 17:00	150	31.8mph	27.3mph	41 – 46mph (1
10.00 - 17.00	152	51.0mpn		vehicle)

Site 5 – Hydro Lodge (within variable 20mph limit)

Eastbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 - 09:00	200	27.9mph	21.1mph	31 – 36mph (7 vehicles)
09:00 - 10:00	170	29.2mph	25.1mph	31 – 36mph (11 vehicles)
14:00 - 15:00	143	30.1mph	25.5mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
15:00 - 16:00	142	29.1mph	23.6mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
16:00 - 17:00	151	29.6mph	25.5mph	36 – 41mph (2 vehicles)
24 Hour Period	1935	30.9mph	25.4mph	36 – 41mph (20 vehicles)
Westbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 - 09:00	91	28mph	22.3mph	31 – 36mph (3 vehicles)
09:00 - 10:00	102	30.3mph	25.2mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
14:00 - 15:00	109	29.3mph	24mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
15:00 - 16:00	146	28.2mph	22.8mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
16:00 - 17:00	131	29.5mph	24.2mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
24 Hour Period	1476	30.2mph	24.9mph	36 – 41mph (17 vehicles)

# Site 6 – Whetstone Bridge Road Junction (within variable 20mph limit)

# Site 7 – Maiden Cross (approximately at the start of the extents of the variable 20mph limit)

Eastbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 - 09:00	279	26.7mph	20.8mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
09:00 - 10:00	242	28.3mph	24.8mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
14:00 - 15:00	199	28.9mph	25mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
15:00 - 16:00	216	27.5mph	22.3mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
16:00 - 17:00	222	28.3mph	24.8mph	36 – 41mph (2 vehicles)
24 Hour Period	2821	28.7mph	24.7mph	41 – 46mph (1 vehicle)
Westbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 - 09:00	197	26.3mph	21.6mph	31 – 36mph (3 vehicles)
09:00 - 10:00	169	27.8mph	24mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
14:00 - 15:00	176	28.4mph	24.4mph	31 – 36mph (9 vehicles)
15:00 – 16:00	254	26.5mph	22.2mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
16:00 - 17:00	234	27.5mph	23.9mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
24 Hour Period	2636	28.3mph	24.3mph	36 – 41mph (13 vehicles)

Eastbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 - 09:00	257	27mph	19.2mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
09:00 - 10:00	236	28.7mph	25.2mph	31 – 36mph (11 vehicles)
14:00 - 15:00	208	28.7mph	25.2mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
15:00 - 16:00	215	27.7mph	22.8mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
16:00 - 17:00	211	27.8mph	24.4mph	31 – 36mph (8 vehicles)
24 Hour Period	2770	28.7mph	24.6mph	36 – 41mph (13 vehicles)
Westbound	Volume	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
08:00 - 09:00	180	25.9mph	21.7mph	31 – 36mph (2 vehicles)
09:00 - 10:00	162	27.8mph	24.5mph	36 – 41mph (1 vehicle)
14:00 - 15:00	191	27.8mph	24.3mph	31 – 36mph (5 vehicles)
15:00 - 16:00	248	26.6mph	23mph	31 – 36mph (3 vehicles)
16:00 - 17:00	237	26.8mph	23.7mph	31 – 36mph (4 vehicles)
24 Hour Period	2598	27.6mph	24.2mph	36 – 41mph (2 vehicles)

# Site 8 – The Larches (within new advisory 20 when lights flash extents)