



Northumberland

County Council

ASHINGTON AND BLYTH LOCAL AREA COUNCIL
DATE: 16TH MARCH 2022

PETITION – B1523 SOUTH NEWSHAM ROAD, BLYTH

Report of: Service Director - Local Services, Paul Jones

Cabinet Member: John Riddle

Purpose of report

To acknowledge receipt of the e-petition received by Democratic Services regarding road safety on the B1523 South Newsham Road, Blyth.

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 requesting that traffic calming measures are introduced as the petitioner considers the majority of road users do not abide by the speed limit.
2. The petition states that there have been several accidents, and it is felt that it only a matter of time before there is a serious accident to a member of the public. It also states that there have been near misses witnessed which have involved school children on their way home from school.
3. Volume of traffic is also raised as a concern; it indicates recent new builds have only increased the problem. The petition states this will only become worse when the proposed Northumberland Line is operating.
4. This online petition has been signed by 78 signatories.

5. We note the issues raised in the Petition. Councillor Humphrey has already allocated some of his Members Local Improvement Scheme allowance into some preliminary design options to address some of these issues and we will be undertaking some preliminary design work to look at potential solutions.
6. There are significant highway works proposed affecting this road as part of two planning applications.
7. New speed and camera surveys to be carried out to .
8. Continue to work with Road Safety Unit at Northumbria Police to agree appropriate enforcement of speed limit.

Background

The Petition

The County Council has received a 78 name petition stating that :-

“The B1523 road needs to have speed calming measures in place as the majority of road users do not abide by the speed limit, there have been several RTA and I feel it is only a matter of time before there is a serious accident to a member of the public in the recent weeks I have witnessed two near misses on the road which involved children on their way home from school.

“Not only the high speeds, which is a massive issue we also have the additional volume of traffic from all the new builds in this area along with the extra traffic which will happen when the train link is operational the road is ridiculously busy now, can you imagine how bad it will be with this additional traffic morning and night.”

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.

Councillor Humphrey has already allocated some of his Members Local Improvement Scheme allowance into some preliminary design options to address some of these issues.

There are ongoing developments in the area which include works to the road layout and these will need to be taken into account in any future works.

In response to the petition we have examined the accident data and speed survey information for the road which is set out below.

Accident Data

According to accident data from Northumbria Police, there have been no personal injury collisions on B1523 South Newsham Road between Cottingwood Green and the roundabout at the A1061 junction in the last 5 years.

The only recorded accidents in the vicinity were two serious accidents which occurred in 2021 at or on the approach to the A1061 roundabout.

In March 2021, a car travelling east on Laverock Hall Road, approaching the roundabout applied its brakes in accordance with other traffic. The rider of a motorcycle following had a momentary lapse of concentration and collided with the car causing the rider to propel over the handlebars causing a suspected fracture to their right arm.

In July 2021 a cyclist was travelling along Laverock Hall Road and entered the roundabout. A car has also entered the roundabout failing to see the cyclist causing them to collide with the car.

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

Our most recent speed survey was carried out in June 2019 at the southern side of Park Farm, a summary of the results are as follows:-

Northbound Vehicles

Average Daily Vehicles	85 th Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
4495	35.3mph	30.9mph	46-51mph (8 vehicles)

Southbound Vehicles

Average Daily Vehicles	85 th Percentile	Average Speed	Highest Recorded Speed
4641	34.4mph	29.9mph	46-51mph (4 vehicles)

Note:- The 85th percentile is that speed at which 85% of vehicles are travelling (or less). The remaining 15% of vehicles will be travelling above that speed.

It is recognised that traffic flow and vehicle speeds may have increased since this survey was carried out. A new speed survey is planned and once new data is available, this can be considered in deciding future actions.

A camera survey is also planned to assess current behaviour and the potential risk to pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.

The concerns regarding excessive vehicle speed have been passed onto the police for further investigation for any appropriate enforcement action.

Planning Applications

There are two developments which will involve highway works along this length of road.

Land South West of Park Farm – Planning Ref: 20/04131/REM

This development includes the following highway works:

- Provision of two new priority junctions to access the development from the B1523
- Widening of the B1523 to allow for ghost island right turn pockets into the existing Park Farm Villas and to the new estate
- Provision of pedestrian refuge island to the North of Park Farm Villas.

Northumberland Line, South Newsham Station – Planning Ref: 21/03720/CCD

This development proposes the following highway works:

- Remove the existing roundabout linking the B1523 and the A1061.
- Provide a new larger roundabout to the West of the existing roundabout.
- Re-align the B1523 to align with the new roundabout.
- Provide a new priority junction to the station car park on off the re-aligned B1523.

As noted, Councillor Humphrey has already allocated some of his Members Local Improvement Scheme allowance into some preliminary design options to address some of the issues raised in the petition.

However, given the future highway works noted above, it has been agreed that relatively small-scale improvements would be considered in the short term until the effects on traffic of the new highway works can be seen. These improvements could include : -

- A) improved signage and road markings,
- B) bolt down traffic calming measures which can be removed as necessary, and,
- C) additional interactive signs

Proposed Actions

- A) Carry out new speed survey to assess how vehicles numbers and speeds may have increased since 2019 when previous survey was carried out.
- B) Carry out camera survey to assess current behaviour and potential risk to pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.
- C) Proceed with preliminary design work funded through Cllr Humphrey's Members Local Improvement Scheme allowance to identify appropriate small scale improvements.
- D) Continue to work closely with the Road Safety Unit at Northumbria Police to agree enforcement action.

Implications

Policy	The response to the issues raised in this petition is consistent with LTP Policies.
Finance and value for money	Preliminary design to be funded through Cllr Humphrey's 2021/22 MLIS allocation
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 along this route.
Carbon reduction	n/a
Wards	Newsham

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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