

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER DECISIONS MEETING FOR ENVIRONMENT

15TH DECEMBER 2017

Executive Board Member: Cllr. Hazel Evans	Portfolio: Environment
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PROPOSED RAISED PLATEAU, STATION ROAD, NANTGAREDIG

Purpose:

To consider the proposed highway measures along with responses received as part of the statutory consultation process.

Recommendations / key decisions required:

To consider the outcome of a statutory consultation for a vertical measure (raised plateau) on Station Road, Nantgaredig and to determine the outcome of the objection. To approve the proposals to introduce the vertical measure (as per Option 1)

Reasons:

In the interest of wider road, pedestrian and cyclist safety within the Towy Valley Path programme of works.

Directorate		
Name of Head of Service:	Designation	Tel No.
Steve Pilliner	Head of Highways and Transport	01267 228385
Report Author:		E Mail Address:
Sam Palmer	Towy Valley Path Project Officer	SEPalmer@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

Declaration of Personal Interest (if any):

Dispensation Granted to Make Decision (if any):

DECISION MADE:

Signed:

DATE: _____

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER

Recommendation of Officer adopted	YES / NO
Recommendation of the Officer was adopted subject to the amendment(s) and reason(s) specified:	
Reason(s) why the Officer's recommendation was not adopted:	

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER DECISIONS MEETING FOR
ENVIRONMENT**

15TH DECEMBER 2017

**PROPOSED RAISED PLATEAU, STATION ROAD,
NANTGAREDIG**

1. BRIEF SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF REPORT.

The Towy valley path scheme aims to create a world class active travel facility in the Towy Valley linking Carmarthen to Llandeilo. The creation of the shared use path will link communities, create tourism opportunities, and encourage safe sustainable and healthy travel. The total length of the scheme is approximately 20 kilometres and due to its size the scheme has been broken down into different sections for construction.

Welsh Government Local Transport Funding and Rural Communities Rural Development Programme funding has been secured to deliver the section W4a of the path which is the subject of this report.

Section W4a includes the proposal to introduce a set vertical measures in the form of a raised plateau on Station Road, Nantgaredig on the southern approach to the village. Whilst having clear stand-alone road safety benefits it has been brought forward as part of the wider Towy Valley Path scheme.

The location for the raised plateau was chosen following a scoping exercise undertaken by the project team; a specific stretch of Station Road was identified where proposals include improving and introducing a footway therefore there is a need to ensure traffic speeds are reduced to enable safer pedestrian & cyclist movements. The proposal would provide localised safety improvements but would also provide a safer environment for all those using the Towy Valley Path in particular 'family' cycling groups. Speed data collected in March 2016 shows 85th percentile speeds of 35.7mph Northbound and 37.4mph in a Southbound direction. The speed limit is 30 mph in this location.

A statutory consultation exercise was undertaken from the 11th October 2017 to the 3rd November 2017. Site notices (see appendix 1) were displayed on site during the aforementioned period and a notice was displayed in the Carmarthen Journal on the 11th October 2017. Following the statutory public consultation period an objection was received on the 2.11.17 from the owners of 3 properties in close proximity to the proposed plateau which states concerns over:

- Increased noise levels where heavy vehicles cross the plateau which would potentially be a detriment to the property
- The proposed plateau will not slow vehicles down enough to make it safe to cross.
- Potential conflict with electricity poles in the footway
- Pollution caused by vehicles slowing down on approach and accelerating after crossing the plateau
- The proposed route could be amended
- Alternative speed reduction measures could be introduced
- Lack of traffic calming measures outside a nearby school

2. OTHER OPTIONS AVAILABLE AND THEIR PROS AND CONS

Following the recent objection and subsequent discussions within the project team two options are presented for consideration. The advantages and disadvantages of the proposals have been outlined below:

Option 1- Proceed with the introduction of the raised plateau

Option 1 is to proceed with installing the raised plateau as set out in the attached plan.

Advantages of this option are that it would slow down traffic and enhance pedestrian safety. It would also provide a safe, level crossing point for users of the Towy Valley Path. Vehicle speeds at road hump schemes are determined generally by the height and spacing of the raised plateau. Results from schemes on public roads showed the mean crossing speeds of vehicles to be 12.8 mph and 13.6 mph for 75 mm and 100 mm high flat-top plateau (with gradients of 1:10 to 1:15) respectively (ref Local Transport Note 1/07)

Disadvantages of the introduction of the raised plateau is that it is contrary to the wishes of some residents that have raised concerns with the Council, this could lead to further local opposition to the scheme and noise complaints from residents as a result of vehicles passing over the humps.

Option 2 – Removal of raised plateau and replace with vehicle activated signs and road markings

Option 2 is to remove the plateau and replace with vehicle activated signs and road markings. The signs would specifically warn drivers of their speed and road markings would identify the crossing point.

The advantages of this option are that signage has been shown to provide road safety and speed reduction improvements between 3 and 9 mph (ref p.90 of Local Transport Note 1/07 published by the department of Transport). It also shows that the concerns of the residents have been taken into consideration.

The disadvantages are that signage is not considered as effective as physical/vertical measures in terms of reducing speed therefore signage may not have the desired impact. Any speed reductions would be more general as opposed to at a specific crossing location. Removal of the at grade crossing would result in users travelling over different levels and as such there would not be a 'safe route' to cross the road that would be readily identified by pedestrians, cyclists and drivers alike.

After analysing available traffic speed data it is requested that **Option 1** is considered for approval.

Each objection has been considered and a response to each is set out in Appendix Two of this report.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?

NO

Appendix 1 – Site notice

Appendix 2 - Comments and responses

IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report :

Signed: **R. Mullen**

Director of Environment

Policy and Crime & Disorder	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Organisational Development	Physical Assets
Yes	Yes	Yes	NONE	YES	NONE	Yes

1. Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities

Road safety is one of the seven key priorities of the Carmarthenshire Community Safety Partnership.

Improving walking and cycling links is highlighted as a policy in the Joint Local Transport Plan for South West Wales (2015/2020)

2. Legal

The County Council as the local highway authority may exercise its powers in relation to the construction of the proposed raised plateau, complying with the regulations contained within the Highways (traffic Calming) Regulations 1999, Transport Note 01/07 Traffic Calming and Highways Act

The County Council has a duty under the Active Travel Act (Wales) 2013 to develop, maintain and improve infrastructure that encourages active travel journeys

Land purchase of grass verges are required to deliver the raised plateau and new footway which will be subject to the necessary legal process

3. Finance

The proposals for a raised plateau have been included in an RCDF funding bid which is match funded by Local Transport Fund grants. Any amendments to the original project will require approval by the funding body which could impact the programme.

Funding for land acquisition is in place.

5. Risk Management Issues

Risk of claims from objectors to noise level increases around their property due to the introduction of a raised plateau. Microphones could be installed in the locality to measure noise increases and if they are found to be unacceptable the County Council would need to bear the cost of the removal of the plateau. Any future removal of the plateau could potentially result in grant clawback if agreed items are removed from a scheme prior to the end of the clawback period (usually 5 years)

6. Physical Assets

Land will need to be acquired for a new footway which would increase land maintained at highways expense.

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below

Signed: R. Mullen

Director of Environment

1. Scrutiny Committee - N/A

2. Local Member(s)

Cllr Mansel Charles consulted via email on the 11.9.17. No response received.

3. Community / Town Council

Llanegwad Community Council consulted via email on the 11.7.17. No response received

4. Relevant Partners - N/A

5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations - N/A

Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

THERE ARE NONE

CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW ROAD HUMP AT

STATION ROAD, NANTGAREDIG, CARMARTHEN

1. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that in accordance with Section 90C of the Highways Act 1980 that Carmarthenshire County Council in exercise of its powers under Section 90A of the Highways Act 1980 intends to construct road hump complying with the Highways (Road Humps) Regulations 1999 in Nantgaredig.
2. The proposed nature, dimensions and locations of the road hump are as follows:-

Type	Dimensions	Location
Flat Top Raised Plateau	75mm high (<i>subject to the tolerances permitted in the Road Hump Regulations, where the hump will not exceed 100mm in maximum height</i>) Width of the Road 6m long flat top	Station Road, Nantgaredig Between the entrances of Tynant, Station Road.

Full details of the proposal together with a plan may be examined at the offices of the Carmarthenshire County Council, County Hall, Carmarthen and at the Customer Services Centre, 3 Spilman Street, Carmarthen during the usual office hours.

3. In the interest of road safety, the road hump is considered necessary to facilitate and maintain low vehicle speeds in the vicinity of the proposed priority give way system on the aforementioned road.
4. If you wish to object to the installation of these vertical measures you should send the grounds for your objection in writing to The Head of Administration and Law, Carmarthenshire County Council, County Hall, Carmarthen. SA31 1JP by no later than the 3rd November, 2017.

DATED the 11th October, 2017
File Reference: RWJ/HTTR-1478

Direct Line: (01267) 224074
email: rwjones@carmarthenshire.gov.uk

MARK JAMES
Chief Executive
County Hall
Carmarthen

Comments and responses

Ref	Comments	Response
1	<p>As the road hump will be in front of Tynant this will affect all three properties adversely with tipper-lorries which already travel through Station Road passing early in the morning (5-6am) or late at night. These lorries passing via Station Road on their way from A40 to A48, they are expected to make a lot of noise driving over the humps at 20-30mph that early in the morning (or late at night). We are concerned that our properties will need triple-glassing windows to be installed because of the noise and this is a considerable expense.</p>	<p>Local Transport Note 1/07 references that results from schemes on public roads showed the mean crossing speeds of vehicles to be 12.8 mph and 13.6 mph for 75 mm and 100 mm high flat-top humps (with gradients of 1:10 to 1:15) respectively</p> <p>Traffic data taken between the 18th March and the 24th March 2016 indicated the following: 13128 vehicles travelled through the village. 368 were vehicles with two axles or more which represents 2.8% of the total vehicles for the week. A total of 24 vehicles with two axles or more travelled through Nantgaredig between 5am and 6am during the week.</p> <p>Noise resulting from moving traffic is not classed as a nuisance under public health legislation.</p> <p>Tynant is directly adjacent to the proposed raised plateau, Talar Wen is approximately 25 linear meters away from the proposed plateau and Blaenwinllan is approximately 40 linear meters away from the plateau. The front facades of the buildings in question are set back from the edge of the highway by approximately 14 -16 meters.</p>
2	<p>According to these plans the raised hump intends to slow down traffic to make the crossing of the cyclists more secure “in the vicinity of the proposed priority give way system”. However, this hump is positioned too close to the cyclists crossing area to have any traffic-calming effect.</p>	<p>Sufficient advanced warning signs and road markings will be installed to ensure users are alerted to the presence of the plateau on the approach to it. Existing Public lighting will ensure the raised plateau is visible at night.</p> <p>The average crossing speeds of vehicles over raised plateaus are between 12.8 mph and 13.6 mph for 75 mm and 100 mm high flat-top humps (with gradients of 1:10 to 1:15) respectively (ref Local Transport Note 1/07) These figures indicate the potential traffic calming effect related to the proposed measure.</p>

3	<p>Importantly at the proposed crossing you will be faced to deal with 6 electricity pillars as obstacles (where are you going to put these? they are already adjacent to property walls) and use the pavement available which is already narrow.</p>	<p>The existing footways are being widened on the eastern side of the highway from Coynant to Tynant which is approximately 100 meters in length. The footway will be widened to an average width of 2.5m from its existing average width of 2m.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that the improved footway will not meet the width requirements of the Active Travel Standards at certain pinch points where electricity poles are located in the footway. Widths will be reduced to approximately 1.7m at these pinch points. It is not considered viable to widen the footways further as this would involve the relocation of the electricity poles and the need for additional purchase of third party land. Cyclists will be encouraged to dismount whilst travelling along this section of footway on Station Road and as they pass over the crossing point.</p>
4	<p>A recent report informs on the UK policy under consideration (Jan 2017) to remove all humps from roads due to pollution of vehicles. As the vehicles decelerate and accelerate after passing the humps they exert more polluting exhaust fumes and the lorries are the worst pollutants. This suggest that the council may be spending funds unwisely – i.e. not future-proofing against developing policy of road safety that aligns with environmental sustainability.</p>	<p>No formal guidance from Welsh Government or the Department for Transport has been released to suggest raised plateaus should be removed on a pollution basis.</p> <p>The location in question in rural in nature and the traffic data has illustrated that the average daily traffic flow along the road is less than 2000 vehicles a day over a 7 day period. The properties along the route are set well back from the roadside with the nearest property to the proposed raised plateau being at least 14m away, thus providing good spatial separation from the highway and along good dispersion of pollutants from vehicle emissions.</p>
5	<p>Instead of a crossing to the cycling path continue the cycling route trajectory on the same side of the road and cross at the entrance of the Crane Yard (N&A James, owners of business do not object to such crossing). By doing so you will develop a strip of road that has no pavement at the moment in front of the pub (i.e. will look nicer and safer for all users). You will also avoid 6 electricity posts and have to deal with only one instead.</p>	<p>This alternative proposal is not a desirable option due to safety and landownership issues.</p>
6	<p>Speed calming measures for the entire Station Road (i.e. not only the cycling path crossing)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Speed cameras: These are the most proven measures in slowing the traffic down. o “Speed cushions” type humps be installed along Station Road in multiple locations using hump systems with gaps that allow wide-track vehicles to pass without noise from hump-impact at residential areas. 	<p>Traffic calming measures in the form of Driver feedback (DFS) signs have been installed on Station Road (B4310) and the speed limit has been reduced from 40 – 30mph. The proposed raised plateau will provide a traffic calming measure for vehicles travelling from the South which will complement the existing DFS approximately 105 meters further to the North of the village and the other DFS signs in close proximity to the school.</p>
7	<p>Divert the Cycling route away from the residential area -i.e. turn right instead of left at the junction with Station Road and cut across into the fields to join the original rail track.</p>	<p>Various route alignment options have been tested during the development of the Towy Valley Path and the proposed route has proved to be the most viable.</p>

8	<p>Finally, it is of great concern that Nantgaredig is one of few locations in Wales that has a 30mph speed limit outside a primary school (Ysgol Nantgaredig) where no traffic measures to slow the traffic down exist (until recently this was even a 40mph road!). However, the Council considers that a cycling route crossing is worthier of such measures</p>	<p>The multi-agency (Roads Policing Unit / Carm. CC Road safety) speed limit working group have agreed that the speed restriction outside the School should be reduced to 20mph.</p> <p>The group has indicated that the speed restriction scheme will require physical measures to ensure the limit is self-enforcing.</p> <p>This school site has been added to the schedule of Council's schools speed limit demand library. The speed limit scheme will be delivered as funds become available.</p> <p>Speeds along this section of Station Road in the vicinity of the school will continue to be enforced by the Roads Policing Unit and GoSafe (Wales Road Casualty Reduction Partnership) as part of the multi-agency campaign to enforce speed limits outside schools</p>
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