

Darlaston LNP

Report Title Stafford Road, Darlaston – Traffic Calming

Portfolio: Councillor R Walker

Service Area: Engineering and Transportation

Background:

Please refer to previous report (copy attached).

Evidence for Recommendations:

As Stafford Road already has traffic calming the request for chicanes has been ranked as an environmental traffic calming modification scheme. The ranking is based on road width and length, number of properties, the average cost of a traffic calming scheme, local amenities, and the number of personal injury accidents. When Stafford Road is ranked against other requests for traffic calming modifications, it falls 8th in the table and has a first year rate of return (FYRR) of 56%.

Based on the FYRR of 56% any modification to the traffic calming in Stafford Road does not qualify for funding as a local safety scheme and so has to be ranked as an environmental scheme.

As mentioned in the previous report environmental scheme have to compete with schemes where traffic calming features do not exist and those where there is a known accident problem.

The traffic flows for August 2005 show that Stafford Road has a traffic flow of approximately 100 vehicles in each direction during peak times. This peak flow is not considered to be significant for this type of road. Although the traffic flow is not tidal (no predominant flow in a single direction) the low number of vehicles means chicanes would not be effective, as the number of times a motorist would need to give way to another motorist would be few. This would lead to increased vehicle speeds.

The introduction of chicanes removes the facility to park on street outside of at least six of the properties adjoining the chicanes, which would be sited where the existing speed cushion are. With the number of driveways on Stafford Road locating any chicanes away from resident's access would be difficult which may lead to complaints about problems accessing driveways.

The speed cushions in part of Dangerfield Lane were removed during resurfacing of the road. Chicanes were then constructed in Dangerfield Lane where the peak flow of traffic is double that of Stafford Road.

Schemes for improvements subject to S106 agreements would be identified at the planning stage. No schemes were highlighted in respect of this particular site. There fore there are no monies available through a S106 agreement to fund alterations to the highway geometry.

A transport assessment was not required for a development of this size. Any concerns regarding the impact of the traffic generated by this development would have highlighted by development control officers and recorded in their comments. In this case there were no comments made regarding the impact of this development.

An estimated cost to remove the existing speed cushions and replace them with chicanes (based on 2007 schedule of rates)

Removal of speed cushions and construction of chicanes at six location	£50,000.00
Provision of illuminated signs for chicanes	£12,000.00
High friction surfacing	£10,000.00
Alterations to road marking	£ 1,000.00
TOTAL	£73,000.00

With the use of speed cushions there is no requirement for a 20mph speed limit. The spacing and dimensions of the speed cushions in Stafford Road are to Department for Transport guidelines, which mean an average speed of around 20mph is achieved over the whole length of the road without a 20mph speed limit.

It is highly unlikely that the Highways Agency were working in Stafford Road. The Highways Agency is responsible for the trunk road network (such as the A5) and the motorways. For all other roads the Council acts on behalf of the Highway Agency. In this incident it is believed to be consultants working on behalf of our maintenance section.

Recommendations:

That the current traffic calming remains in place as it is the most suitable for option for Stafford Road.

Stafford Road remains in the ranking as an environmental traffic scheme so that the situation is monitored on a yearly basis.

Funding has been identified in the capital programme to permit LNPs to consider their priorities and bid for resources to implement their schemes. The process and criteria to access this funding will be developed during 2007/08. The LNP may wish to consider promoting this scheme as part of this process.

Transportation and Forward Planning do not support the removal of speed cushions in favour of chicanes based on the current personal injury accident rate.

That any restrictions introduced on Willenhall Street would have no effect on the traffic flow in Stafford Road as the roads are not parallel routes to the same destination.

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Background:

Traffic calming introduced during 1998 in its current form of four sets of speed cushions and one road hump halfway along Stafford Road. It was introduced following full consultation of the residents who lived in Stafford Road at that time.

An initial petition was received on 4th April 2003 signed by 16 residents complaining about the vibration cause by HGVs passing over the speed cushions.

A second petition was received on 23rd July 2004 signed by 23 residents requesting that the amount of vibration caused by HGVs passing over the traffic calming to be investigated and actions taken to stop it.

A further petition was received on 3rd October 2004 containing 33 names raising further objections to the traffic calming.

As first named petitioners Mrs Willmore and Mrs Enam were informed on the 18th October 2004 that Stafford Road will be included as an environmental traffic calming scheme on a list for modification and works would be carried out when suitable funds became available.

A request for the removal of the speed cushions in favour of chicanes was received from Mr Salt via Bruce George MP. It was claimed in the letter that HGVs speeding over the traffic calming measure was causing excessive vibration. In reply Mr Salt was informed that no direct funding was available modify the traffic calming, and any such modifications were normally undertaken as part of resurfacing work or environmental improvement schemes. However, Stafford Road would still remain on the list for ranking against other request received to modify traffic calming

A second letter was received from Bruce George MP on the 10th May 2006 expressing Mr Salts concerns that the road speed cushions are not suitable for Stafford Road and that they were in a poor state of repair. In the reply dated 14th June 2006 Mr Salt was informed that repairs had been completed and that due to the nature of area, HGV traffic is to be expected to use Stafford Road.

Evidence for Recommendations:

Accident records show that there have been three slight personal injury accidents in the last three years at or near the junction of Stafford Road and Willenhall Street, away from the traffic calmed section of Stafford Road.

All requests to modify traffic calming are ranked against each other using cost to modify the scheme and the number of accidents in a three year period. Using these figures it is possible to calculate the first year rate of return. The FYRR is then used to rank the requests. Stafford Road current has a FYRR of 56% based on 3 accidents and a cost of £50,000 (based on experience of a recent chicane scheme in Dangerfield Lane).