

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN BY CORPORATE DIRECTOR

DIRECTOR OF LOCAL SERVICES AND HOUSING: PAUL JONES

B6530 NEWCASTLE ROAD, CORBRIDGE - ROAD MARKINGS

Purpose of report:

To consider the operation of the B6250 Newcastle Road, Corbridge since new road markings were installed, the feedback received, the outcomes of the road safety audit undertaken and to make recommendations on the next course of action.

Recommendations:

Having considered the information in relation to the B6250 Newcastle Road, Corbridge road marking scheme, it is recommended that the trial continues for an additional 6 months with the following modifications:-

- (1) Remove the entire length of the westbound advisory cycle lane.
- (2) Retain the entire length of the uphill eastbound advisory cycle lane with additional signage to make it clear it is an advisory cycle lane.
- (3) In order to keep the advisory cycle lane free from parked vehicles it is proposed to introduce a TRO at the western end of the cycle lane to facilitate this.

In addition it is recommended that Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative and Northumbria Police are contacted requesting some enforcement of the speed limit.

Key issues

An experimental road marking scheme was installed on the B6350 in November 2015. The B6350 forms part of the national Hadrians Cycle Route NCN 72. The road marking scheme involved provision of advisory cycle lanes and the omission of a centre line. A public meeting was held at the beginning of the trial and a subsequent meeting held on 3 October 2016 to present the main issues arising from the trial, which were:

- (1) No collisions recorded by the police
- (2) No evidence of near misses caught on camera
- (3) On-street car parking causing a road safety hazard
- (4) The evidence from the speed surveys suggests traffic speeds have reduced at both survey locations but speed is still excessive
- (5) The majority of concerns expressed by residents centre around driver confusion leading to near misses

Both the local County Councillor and the Parish Council have expressed concerns about the scheme. A road safety audit has recently been undertaken for the scheme. Taking account of the information regarding the operation of the scheme, the role of the route on the national cycle network, the local feedback given and the results of the road safety audit, it is recommended that the trial continues for a further 6 months with the amendments set out in the recommendations above.

B6530 NEWCASTLE ROAD, CORBRIDGE - ROAD MARKINGS

BACKGROUND

- 1) A number of Highway Authorities in the UK have already taken the decision not to reinstate centreline road markings following resurfacing schemes in 30mph areas with evidence to suggest that the absence of a centreline can reduce vehicle speeds.
- 2) The maintenance scheme carried out on the B6350 in November 2015 provided scope to trial the removal of the centreline. Since this section of road forms part of the national Hadrian's Cycle Route NCN72, the opportunity was taken to add 1.5 metre wide advisory cycle lanes in each direction. A plan showing the advisory cycle lanes in both directions with the centreline is attached as Appendix A.
- 3) The new markings do not physically reduce the amount of space available for vehicles to pass, as vehicles can use the advisory lanes when there are no cyclists present. The advisory lane markings do provide different visual cues for drivers, the road appears narrower than it is, the possible presence of cyclists and the amount of space required to pass a cyclists safely. Where there is uncertainty evidence suggests that drivers slow down.
- 4) During the trial period a number of speed surveys were conducted at two locations to compare with surveys done before the trial began. Video footage was also gathered to record driver behaviour during the trial.
- 5) There have been no collisions recorded by the police since the trial started which is backed by no near misses caught on camera.
- 6) During the trial, on-street car parking in the vicinity of the health centre was highlighted as a road safety problem and meant the advisory cycle lanes were compromised by the presence of parked vehicles. The parked cars cause traffic to back up in both directions in the vicinity of the traffic calming feature at the bottom of the hill. The on-street parking also impedes visibility for motorists attempting to leave the Health Centre car park and has deterred some visitors from using the car park even though spaces are available.
- 7) Speed survey results gathered during the trial suggest there has been a small reduction in vehicle speeds since the removal of the centre line and introduction of the advisory cycle lanes. The majority of concerns expressed by road users relate to driver confusion leading to near-misses.

- 8) All the evidence gathered from the trial was forwarded to engineers who were asked to conduct an independent Road Safety Audit. This was completed on 10 November 2016. A copy is attached for information as Appendix B.

CONSULTATION

- 9) All correspondence relating to the trial was recorded and contributed to the debate regarding the trial.
- 10) A meeting took place in Corbridge Parish Hall with Cllr Fearon, members of the Parish Council, County Council Officers and a representative from the Health Centre to discuss issues arising from the road marking trial on 3 October 2016, where officers presented the findings gathered during the trial. The findings were presented in a paper circulated to those who attended the meeting. A copy of this paper is attached as Appendix C for information.
- 11) Both the local County Councillor and the Parish Council have continued to express concerns regarding the scheme and that their preferred course of action would be the removal of the cycle lanes and to re-install the centre line.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12) Considering the operation of the scheme, the role of the route on the national cycle network, the local feedback given and the results of the road safety audit it is considered that the scheme should be amended. The westbound cycle lane can be removed due to the downhill nature of the westbound cycle lane leading to higher cyclist speeds and to take account of concerns raised during the road safety audit about potential conflicts for cyclists at accesses off the road. Considering the importance of the route on the national cycle network it is felt that the eastbound uphill cycle lane should remain. Additional signage should be provided relating to the eastbound advisory cycle lane. Parking issues at its western end should also be resolved through introduction of a traffic regulation order (TRO). The removal of the westbound cycle lane reduces the fears expressed by local groups regarding potential head on vehicle conflicts. Omitting the centre line in conjunction with the single cycle lane is felt to still visually reduce the width of the road and potentially reduce vehicle speeds and hence it is not intended to re-introduce a centre line marking. It is therefore recommended to extend the trial for another 6 months with the following amendments:

- Remove the entire length of the westbound advisory cycle lane.
- Retain the entire length of the uphill eastbound advisory cycle lane with additional signage to make it clear it is an advisory cycle lane.
- In order to keep the advisory cycle lane free from parked vehicles it is proposed to introduce a TRO at the western end of the cycle lane to facilitate this.

In addition it is recommended that Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative and Northumbria Police are contacted requesting some enforcement of the speed limit.

APPENDIX INDEX

Appendix A – Plan showing Advisory Cycle Lanes

Appendix B – Road Safety Audit

Appendix C - Public Paper

BACKGROUND PAPERS

none

IMPLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE REPORT

Policy:	Consistent with existing policies
Finance and value for money:	Scheme financed from LTP
Human Resources:	None
Property:	None
Equalities:	None
Risk Assessment:	Road Safety Audit
Crime & Disorder:	Motorists are still exceeding the speed limit. Request for enforcement will be issued.
Customer considerations:	Advisory cycle lanes encourage and promote cycling
Sustainability:	Cycling is a sustainable form of transport
Consultation:	Findings from the trial have been shared with County Councillor for the area and Corbridge Parish Council.
Wards:	Corbridge

DECISION TAKEN

Title of Executive Member or Officer(s):

Paul Jones: Director of Local Services and Housing

Subject:

B6530 Newcastle Road, Corbridge - Road Markings

Consultation:

Both the local County Councillor and the Parish Council have continued to express concerns regarding the scheme and that their preferred course of action would be the removal of the cycle lanes and to re-install the centre line

Decision Taken:

To approve the extension of the road marking trail for an additional 6 months with the amendments outlined in the recommendations

Signature of Director



Date

