

Petition – Lets Work Together to Stop the Speeding and Misuse of our Villages

Report by Executive Director: Place

1 Purpose of Report

To present a petition from F. Gilbert calling upon the Council to work with the persons who have signed the Petition to stop speeding and misuse of villages whereby roads may be classified as “B” but are residential and through traffic has to respect this.

2 Petition

The attached petition has been received from F. Gilbert and has been signed by 112 residents. 75 signatories did not provide an address, the remaining 37 listed their addresses in the following streets in Bonnyrigg – High Street, Burnbrae Road, Hillhead, Viewpark Gardens, Polton Road, Broomieknowe, Golf Course Road, James Leary Way, Pentland Road

3 Petitions – Rules and Procedures

3.1 The adopted Midlothian procedures identify 11 categories for which petitions cannot be entertained. The submitted petition as revised by the Petitioner is not proscribed by any of these categories and is therefore valid.

3.2 The petition is in the following terms, viz:-

“Let’s work together to stop the speeding and misuse of our villages”.

4 Investigation by Roads Services

4.1 Mrs Gilbert and signatories initially submitted initial traffic speed, noise and vibration concerns for B704 High Street and Hillhead in January 2019.

4.1.1 Road Services investigated the road safety history for the section of road Mrs Gilbert had highlighted. An investigation of road crashes causing injury on the B704 High Street in the vicinity of the junction of Golf Course Road (100 metres on either side of the junction) has been carried out. The results showed that there was one road crash causing injury at the Golf Course Road junction in both 2014 and 2015 and one crash causing injury at the Health Centre junction in 2015.

One of the road crashes at the Golf Course Road junction caused serious injury to a motorcyclist who lost control on the bend and struck a vehicle travelling in the opposite direction. All of the other casualties at the other crashes caused slight injury.

- 4.1.2** A speed survey was carried out from 21 January until 27 January 2019. The northbound and southbound speeds were recorded on a speed detection radar erected on a street light on High Street just south of Golf Course Road.

The speeds were continuously recorded between the dates specified above. During the survey an average total of 10000 vehicles passed by the detector during a 24 hour period. The recorded speeds are summarised below:

| | 85 percentile | mean average speed |
|------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Northbound | 34.4mph | 28.8mph |
| Southbound | 30.3 mph | 25.3mph |

Looking at the recorded speeds, the northbound speeds are higher and on average 138 vehicles were recorded between 36 mph and 41 mph and 7 vehicles were recorded between 41 and 46 mph between the times of 7am and 7pm. Accordingly the results have been passed to Police Scotland for their information.

- 4.1.3** Mrs Gilbert also made a speed limit comparison between Bonnyrigg with a 30 mph speed limit and Lasswade with a 20 mph speed limit. However the introduction of the 20 mph speed limit within Lasswade, was introduced using only signs. Comparing before and after speed limit results in the Lasswade area had shown only a minor reduction (less than 1 mph in traffic speeds). On examination of road crashes that have caused injury within the 20 mph speed limit since its introduction, there have been 2 crashes causing serious injury and 4 crashes causing slight injury. In this instance, the results have demonstrated that installing reduced speed limit signs does not necessarily mean that road safety and traffic speeds will reduce in accordance with the speed reduction.
- 4.1.4** Currently Midlothian Council's view is to introduce 20 mph speed limits in the vicinity of schools and nurseries. Police Scotland do not routinely enforce 20 mph speed limits unless there is an injury accident issue.
- 4.1.5** Any property located close to a road will be subject to some ground-borne and airborne vibration. However extensive research on various types and ages of buildings has shown that there no evidence to show that ground borne vibration is a source of significant damage to buildings and that there is no evidence that airborne vibration can cause even minor damage. Vibration can have an increased effect by the size/weight of vehicle, how close the property is to the road, the condition of the road but also the structural condition of the property adjacent to the road will also be a factor.

- 4.1.6** In terms of road surface quality B704 High Street/Hillhead was resurfaced in 2014 and is currently in good condition. The site was also inspected for utility reinstatements and utility apparatus and as a result of the inspection Scottish Water slightly raised a piece of their apparatus. It is unclear whether that had an impact on vibration or noise.
- 4.1.7** It is likely that if vertical traffic calming features were installed it is likely they could exacerbate the current resident concerns regarding noise and vibration.
- 4.1.8** Hillhead and High Street, Bonnyrigg are part of the B classified road (B704) and is an important local distributor road that connects Bonnyrigg and Gorebridge. It is also one of two connecting routes to/from Edinburgh and the Edinburgh City Bypass. It is also an important bus route with over 250 public service buses using the route on a daily basis. As with all roads on the public road network there has been an ongoing increase in traffic volumes due to increased car ownership and increased house building. It is therefore very important to maintain and balance traffic flows on existing road infrastructure and not divert additional traffic onto other routes where other residents/properties are also affected by traffic volumes.
- 4.1.9** The council prioritise road safety funding to locations with injury accident clusters. Traffic calming is sometimes installed as a remedial measure where there is both an injury accident issue and a speeding issue. In this instance although there has been injuries caused by road crashes there are other locations within Midlothian that have a higher priority in terms road crash injury reduction.

5 Conclusion

Assessment of the road crashes causing injury occurring on the High Street/Hillhead/Golf Course Road section of road during the past 5 years determines it is no worse than other junctions/sections of road within Bonnyrigg and other towns within Midlothian.

Vehicle speeds were recorded during a continuous 6 day assessment and show that vehicle speeds were not excessive and were mostly observed around the existing speed limit. Therefore there are no plans to introduce either a reduced speed limit or traffic calming. In this instance the vehicle speeds that are a cause for concern for local residents should be enforced by the police.

As High Street/Hillhead is part of an important B classified local distributor road and important bus route on Midlothian's public road network, there are no plans to impose any weight restrictions on this route.

If a homeowner lives close to a road, there is likely to be some ground borne and airborne vibration. As mentioned above, previous research has shown that there no evidence to show that ground borne vibration

is a source of significant damage to buildings and that there is no evidence that airborne vibration can cause even minor damage. On that basis any householder that felt that their house had suffered structural or superficial damage caused by road related ground borne or airborne vibration would have to demonstrate that the damage was directly caused by traffic.

However it is proposed to introduce double yellow lines north of the junction with Golf Course Road as it is considered that this measure would assist vehicles exiting from Golf Course Road and also being seen by oncoming vehicles thereby reducing the risk of a road crash occurring.

6 Report Implications

6.1 Resource

The cost of installing signs and road markings for a 20 mph speed limit or weight restriction signs would be in the region of £2000.00. Additionally the cost for the associated traffic regulation order to be imposed incurs a further £2000.00.

6.2 Risk

The risk of diverting traffic off the B704 onto other traffic routes by introducing a weight limit would cause traffic delays and could impact on road safety on the other traffic routes. A 20 mph limit which did not result in any speed reduction would likely cause continuing correspondence and complaints.

6.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- Community safety
- Adult health, care and housing
- Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- Sustainable growth
- Business transformation and Best Value
- None of the above

6.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Not applicable

6.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Not applicable.

6.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Not applicable.

6.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The availability of a Petitions Committee allows stakeholders to raise issues for consideration by the Council.

6.8 Ensuring Equalities

Not applicable.

6.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

Not applicable.

6.10 IT Issues

Not applicable.

7 Recommendation

1. The Committee is invited to consider the Petition submitted (Appendix 1) and afford the Petitioner the opportunity of addressing the Committee and speaking to the terms of the Petition and:
2. consider the information contained within this report provided by Road Services and afford Road Services the opportunity of addressing the Committee and speaking to the terms thereto and;
3. decide what action should be taken with regard to the Petition –
 - i. take no action and in which case give the Petitioner the reasons for the decision or;
 - ii. pass the Petition to the relevant Director or other Council Committee to look into, with or without any specific recommendation.

29 November 2019

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Background Papers:

Appendix 1 Petition from F. Gilbert