

Report for Resolution

Report to	Norwich Highways Agency Committee 24 November 2011	Item 8
Report of	Head of city development services	
Subject	Constitution Hill speed reducing measures	

Purpose

To consider objections and comments received to the proposal to introduce speed cushions on Constitution Hill on the approach to the Magdalen Road Zebra crossing

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- (1) approve the installation of speed cushions on Constitution Hill;
- (2) ask the head of city development services to carry out the necessary statutory procedures to implement the changes to waiting restrictions on Constitution Hill as advertised and shown on Plan No 11 HD 032 0.

Financial Consequences

The £20,000 funding required for this scheme is available through the 2011/12 local transport plan budget.

Strategic Priority and Outcome/Service Priorities

The report helps to meet the strategic priority “Safe and healthy neighbourhoods – working in partnership with residents to create neighbourhoods where people feel secure, where the streets are clean and well maintained, where there is good quality housing and local amenities and where there are active local communities” and the service plan priority of delivering the local transport plan.

Contact Officers

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Background Documents

Consultation responses

Report

Background

1. Following an assessment of road safety and the desire to improve the crossing facilities at the Magdalen Road / St Clements Hill / Constitution Hill / Denmark Road junction, a scheme was carried out in 2009/10 which included re-aligning the junctions, a new Zebra crossing on Magdalen Road, a raised platform at the Magdalen Road / Waterloo Road junction and extending the existing 20mph speed limit. The layout of the junction is shown as appendix 1.
2. On completing of the scheme, a safety audit was carried out by Norfolk County Council. The safety officers noted and expressed concern that despite the extension of the 20mph speed limit further northwards on Constitution Hill, a high proportion of southbound traffic appeared to be travelling well above 25mph and a number of vehicles were observed to have trouble stopping for the Zebra crossing when required.
3. The auditors advised that traffic speeds should be re-assessed paying particular attention to off-peak and free flowing conditions. They recommended that should average speeds in these conditions be in excess of 25mph, more physical measures should be introduced to ensure that the 20mph speed limit is self enforcing.
4. A traffic speed survey was undertaken at a location outside no. 32 Constitution Hill in November 2009, and the average southbound speed was calculated to be 26.2mph. The average northbound speed was even higher at 27.9mph. Since the scheme was installed, there have been 2 slight personal injury accidents in this area, although neither involved pedestrians.
5. An allocation of £20,000 to address the speeding issue was made available from the 2011/12 Local Transport Plan budget.

Proposal

6. A scheme to introduce 3 pairs of speed cushions on Constitution Hill on the approach to the Magdalen Road Zebra crossing has been developed. The layout is shown as appendix 2.
7. Constitution Hill is a bus route and speed cushions are considered the most appropriate traffic calming measure, as buses, emergency vehicles and other wide wheelbase vehicles can straddle them without too much discomfort. Cars however, will need to reduce speed considerably.
8. Speed cushions work best if vehicles can line themselves up properly to straddle them centrally. It is therefore important that no parking occurs adjacent to them. The end pairs cushions on Constitution Hill require double yellow lines along side to prevent parking, however since they are close to road junctions, the double yellow lines are where parking creates visibility problems for traffic and pedestrians. The middle pair of cushions can be offset from the centreline so that parking alongside the cushion can continue to take place.

Public Consultation

9. A traffic regulation order for the double waiting restrictions and a notice for the speed cushions were advertised on 29 September, and the closing date for objections was 20 October 2011.
10. One objection to the double yellow lines has been received, and some comments about the scheme in general. These are set out as appendix 3.

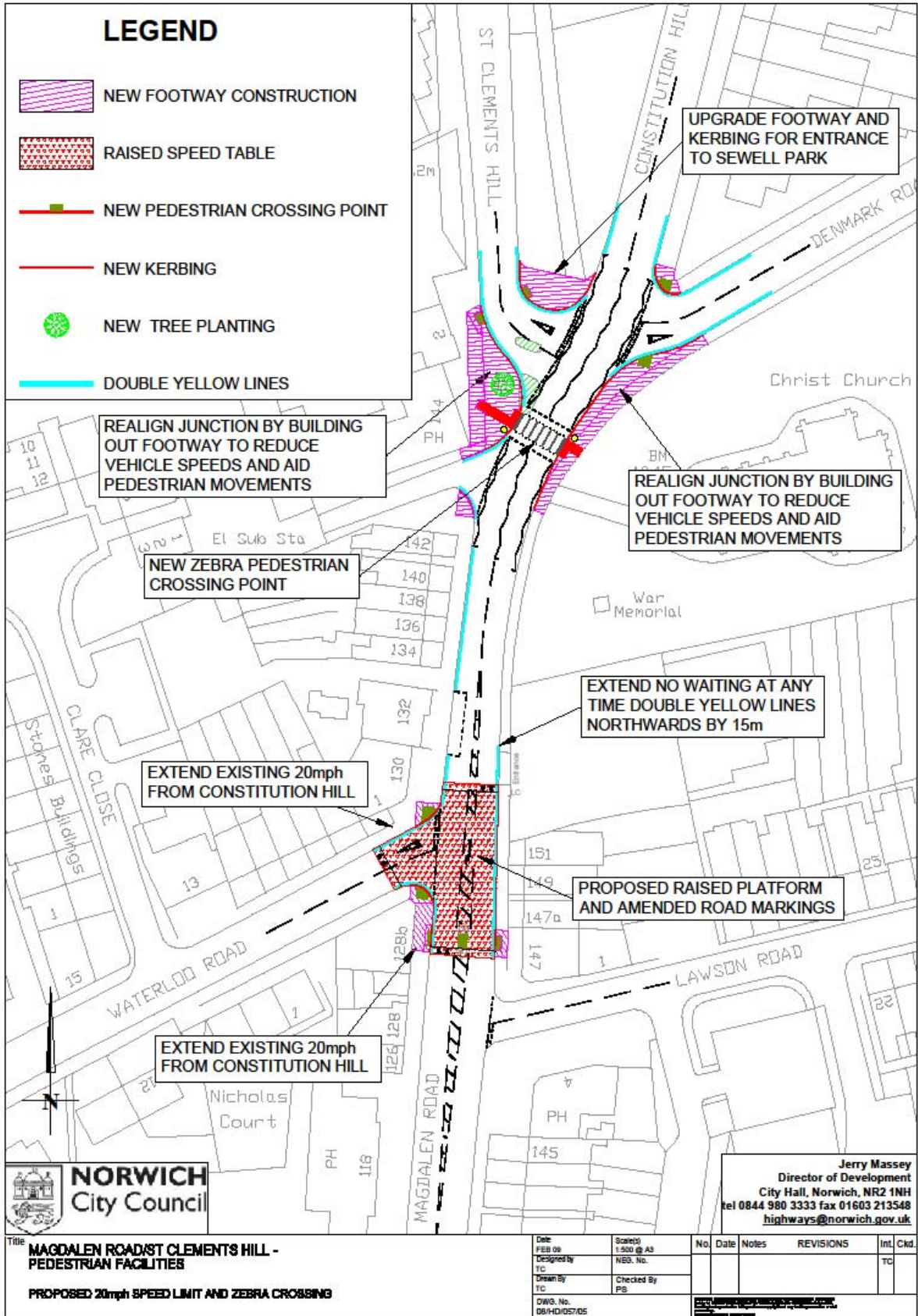
Assessment

11. The objection from the resident of 40 Constitution Hill is based on the noise and pollution they will create, and the on-street parking that the cushions outside no. 40 would remove from both Constitution Hill and De Caux Road.
12. The resident also objects to the double yellow lines outside the property, which will prevent car parking.
13. Speed cushions have been installed in many roads in Norwich (eg Angel Road, The Avenues, Christchurch Road), and the city council does not receive complaints from the residents of these roads about noise generated by the cushions.
14. Research has been carried out which shows that the maximum noise levels from cars are reduced when humps or cushions are installed, as is the overall traffic noise level when cars form most of the traffic stream.
15. Where large commercial vehicles make up a significant proportion of the traffic flow, there can be an increase in noise generated by vehicles passing over humps, however this can be mitigated by careful design of the speed reducing feature. Narrower cushions such as 1600mm width, with gentle ramp gradients can help to reduce noise, although they may also be a reduction in the speed reducing effect.
16. Any noise which is generated by speed humps or cushions should be carefully weighed against the benefits of reduced speed and accidents.
17. The double yellow lines are necessary to prevent car parking adjacent to or partly over the cushion, so that approaching vehicles can line themselves up with the centre of the cushion. The pair of cushions near the De Caux Road junction have been positioned as close as possible to the road junction so that the yellow lines only remove parking from places where parking could restrict visibility or access for larger vehicles. The Highway Code states that drivers should not park within 10m of a junction.
18. Another resident has suggested that a speed table may be more appropriate at the Zebra crossing site. This would be more expensive and would only reduce speeds at the Zebra itself, not on the approach.

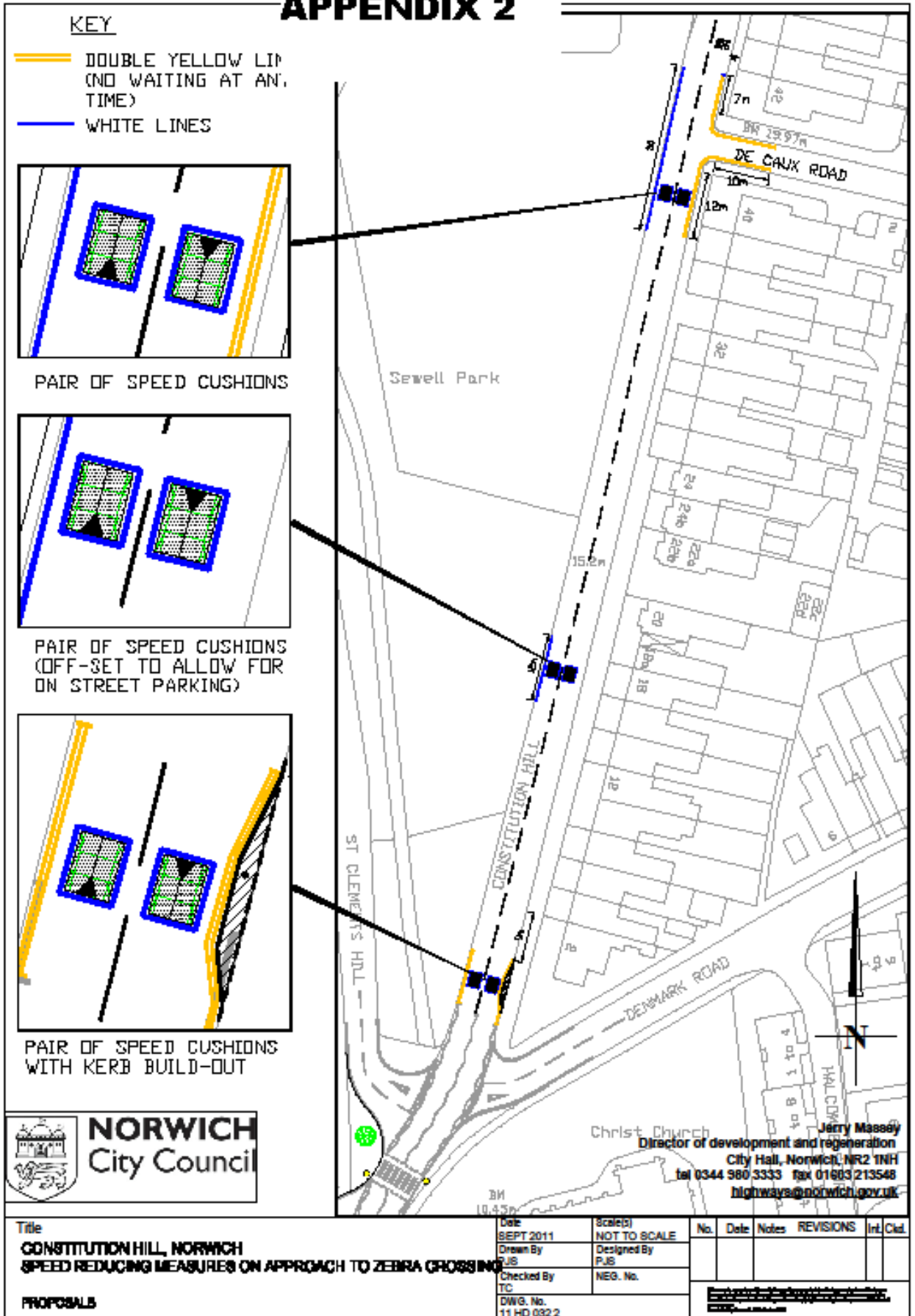
Conclusion

19. Three pairs of speed cushions would reduce traffic speeds on the approach to the Magdalen Road Zebra crossing and improve road safety for all road users. The profile of the cushions will be designed to minimise any problems with noise or vibration.

APPENDIX 1



APPENDIX 2



APPENDIX 3

PROPOSED SPEED REDUCING MEASURES ON CONSTITUTION HILL, NORWICH

RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION, OCTOBER 2011

ADDRESS	OBJECTION / COMMENTS	OFFICERS' RESPONSE
40 Constitution Hill	OBJECTION The speed cushions will be ineffective, will create greater noise pollution and reduce the amount of parking. The double yellow lines will prevent parking outside this house, and reduce the amount of parking in De Caux Road. Speed cameras or kerb build-outs would be more effective.	Speed cushions do not generally create a noise nuisance with cars but can with HGVs. The cushions can be designed to minimise this problem. The double yellow lines are at Constitution Hill / De Caux Road junction, where parking is undesirable as it creates difficulties for access and visibility. Kerb build-outs to narrow the road to a single lane would not be appropriate considering the volume of traffic using the road. Speed cameras are unlikely to be effective in this instance.
6 Constitution Hill	<u>Comments</u> - would prefer to see a speed table near the Zebra crossing and a Zebra crossing warning sign on the approach. Speed cushions cause more noise and damage to vehicles.	A speed table at on near the crossing would be more expensive and would only reduce traffic speeds at one location. The problem identified is one of traffic approaching the crossing at too high a speed, so it is necessary to reduce speeds approaching the crossing.
Public Transport Unit, Norfolk County Council	<u>Comments</u> - would prefer the speed cushions to be slightly lower and longer for comfort of bus passengers	Will investigate ideal profile for buses and amend design accordingly
48 Constitution Hill	<u>Comments</u> - approve of the proposals but would suggest additional cushions further up the road near the park entrance and the college entrance	Insufficient budget to provide further speed management features
108 Constitution Hill	<u>Comments</u> – approves of the proposals but would like to see additional traffic calming near the school and the zebra crossing raised	Insufficient budget to provide further speed management features
4 Constitution Hill	<u>Comments</u> – No objection	Noted
Christ Church, Magdalen Road	<u>Comments</u> – Strongly supports the proposal	Noted
Norfolk Constabulary	<u>Comments</u> - No objections	Noted
2 Constitution Hill	<u>Comments</u> - Approve of the speed cushions but concerned about the reduction in parking due to the double yellow lines. Several commuters park on Constitution Hill.	The scheme has been designed to minimise the loss of on-street parking, but some parking restrictions are required to enable the speed cushions to operate properly.