
Stourbridge Area Committee – Monday 21 January 2008

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

The Old Quarter, Stourbridge – Traffic Matters

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Area Committee of the results of an investigation following Members' requests for a 20mph speed limit in the Old Quarter, Stourbridge.

Background

2. The Old Quarter lies on the western side of Stourbridge Town Centre, and mainly consists of older residential properties fronted by narrow streets. Ward Members have identified that the area is used by some motorists to drive between South Road (the B4186) and Enville Street (the A458).
3. Records indicate that six slight personal injury accidents occurred throughout the Old Quarter in the three year period to 31st July 2007. This personal injury accident record is low for such a large sector of highway.
4. The results of traffic flow surveys (07.00 hours to 19.00 hours) taken on a typical week day are as follows:-

Albert Street	two-way	1682 vehicles
Brook Street	two-way	1357 vehicles
Cecil Street	one-way	739 vehicles
Clifton Street	two-way	1326 vehicles
Greenfield Avenue	two-way	1701 vehicles
Heath Street	two-way	788 vehicles
West Street	one-way	299 vehicles
Wheeler Street	one-way	607 vehicles

5. Vehicle numbers are typical in an area of this type,. Even in the quieter two-way streets in the locale, vehicle movements average around 100 vehicles per hour.

Actions already taken to reduce through traffic

6. New Signs have been erected on every suitable road junction leading into the Old Quarter. These signs warn drivers of lorries and other wide vehicles that the Old Quarter is unsuitable for their use.

Proposed Works

7. Albert Street has been identified as a key through route
8. The footway at the junction of Green Street and Albert Street is currently too narrow for use by vulnerable pedestrians and the residents of a house situated at the junction have complained about receiving structural damage to their property on a number of occasions.
9. It is proposed to extend the footway at the junction of Green Street and Albert Street during the next financial year, as shown on Drawing No. TM2611. It is anticipated that this slight adjustment could set residents' minds at rest concerning damage to their properties, whilst not inhibiting slow vehicle turning actions.

Members' requests for a 20mph speed limit

10. Members have requested that consideration be given to the introduction of a 20mph speed limit throughout the Old Quarter.
11. Such a measure would need to be supported by traffic calming measures that could not be warranted over such a wide area as the Council currently introduces such measures only as part of a local safety scheme where the emphasis is on the reduction of the recorded number of personal injury accidents.
12. Many residents in the Old Quarter do not have the benefit of off-street parking facilities and have to park their cars on street. This on-highway parking may assist in dissuading through traffic. Should residents regard speeding as being a problem, they may wish to inform the Police that vehicles are being regularly driven at speeds greater than the limit permits.

Possible future initiatives near to schools

13. There is a Government initiative to consider the introduction of 20mph speed limits on appropriate roads in front of schools. If such a project was to be taken forward Hill Street in front of Greenfields Primary School might be included in such a scheme and the need for the introduction of suitable secondary speed reduction measures in Hill Street would be borne in mind at this time.

Finance

14. The costs associated with the widening of the public footway at the junction of Green Street and Albert Street are estimated to be around £5,000. This work will be funded from the 2008-9 Minor Works Capital Allocation.

Law

15. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 empowers the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of its functions.
16. The Council is under a duty to improve highways under Section 62 of the Highways Act 1980.
17. Traffic Regulation Orders (including those for speed limits) are made under Section 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Equality Impact

18. The proposals and information contained within this report comply with the Council's equal opportunities policy.
19. The widening of sections of public footway can assist vulnerable pedestrians and mobility impaired persons to travel.

Recommendation

20. The Committee note the contents of this report.



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List of Background Papers

Minutes of Stourbridge Area Committee, 19th November 2007