

Report

Report to:	Roads Safety Forum
Date of Meeting:	13 June 2023
Report by:	Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

Subject:	Westwood Hill, East Kilbride
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ provide a report to the Forum in relation to matters discussed and considered at the Petition Committee of 19 April 2023 and referred to the Roads Safety Forum

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Forum is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the recommendations, as set out in section 5 of the report, be noted and supported.

3. Background

- 3.1. A petition was lodged with the Council requesting traffic calming measures at Westwood Hill, East Kilbride which was subsequently presented to the Petitions Committee on 19 April 2023. The Committee concluded that the matter be referred to the Road Safety Forum with a number of actions to be considered.
- 3.2. The petitioner sought both traffic calming measures and pedestrian crossing facilities on Westwood Hill and mentioned observed issues with speeding vehicles along this route, difficulty crossing the road, and the fact the Police Scotland do not have the resources to deal with this issue.
- 3.3. Officers from Roads, Transportation and Fleet Services presented information regarding the Council's evidenced based casualty reduction policy and the requirement to focus on areas of demonstratable need based upon existing road traffic collision data, and in line with available funding.
- 3.4. In terms of traffic volumes, the Council has been monitoring traffic volumes within East Kilbride for a number of years. These indicate that current traffic volumes in the area are similar to pre-COVID-19 levels. Indeed, historic data demonstrates that traffic volumes have fluctuated over the years where there was a peak around 2007, there was then a significant drop in traffic for several years with the volumes recovering only to reduce during the pandemic. We are satisfied that there is not a capacity issue upon Westwood Hill and please note that further traffic monitoring will be undertaken.
- 3.5. In terms of the introduction of a crossing facility, the Council undertakes a 'Gap Assessment' to determine whether there is reasonable opportunity for pedestrians to cross a road safely. The number of gaps between vehicles that exceed the time

required to cross the road at a relatively slow walking pace are considered, along with the pedestrian demand and any local factors such as the presence of nearby community facilities. This method allows each location to be ranked to reflect the priority for a crossing facility when compared to other assessed locations. A pedestrian crossing survey was undertaken on Westwood Hill within vicinity of its priority junction with Newlands Road / Rockhampton Avenue in September 2021. The survey showed Westwood Hill to be of low priority when compared to other assessed locations. Taking the above into consideration, Westwood Hill could not be considered for a crossing facility at this time. A commitment was given at the Petitions Committee to undertake a further survey.

- 3.6. The policy and approach associated with casualty reduction and requests for pedestrian crossings has been explained in other papers presented at the Roads Safety Forum today and supported by the Forum previously.

4. Discussion

- 4.1. In terms of the actions resulting from the Petitions Committee, these are noted below alongside a response to each one.

Action 1 - Liaison with Police Scotland regarding enforcement action / survey

- 4.2. Liaison has been undertaken with Police Scotland who have since carried out enforcement action throughout the month of May 2023.
- 4.3. Enforcement action was undertaken during the month of May 2023 where officers were on Westwood Hill on 13 separate occasions which resulted in a total presence of approximately 6.5 hours.
- 4.4. This action was undertaken over different days and over various times of these days between 0900hrs and 2200hrs.
- 4.5. This concluded that attendance saw strong compliance with the posted 30mph speed limit and little evidence of excess speed with one conditional offer for speeding issued and one driver issued with a warning.
- 4.6. It is recognised that a Police presence may influence driver behaviours during enforcement exercises. Therefore, speed data was also collected between the 22 May 2023 and the 29 May 2023 and this found that the average speeds were approximately 31mph and the 85th percentile speeds were approximately 35mph.
- 4.7. While these measured speeds are slightly higher than those witnessed by Police Scotland observations during their enforcement action, it should be noted that these speeds alone would not trigger priority for more extensive enforcement action when compared to other areas in South Lanarkshire. However, the location will remain part of Police Scotland's plans and will, commensurate with other duties, be subject to periods of future enforcement.

Action 2 - conduct a repeat GAP survey for consideration of pedestrian crossing facilities

- 4.8. A nationally applied assessment framework is used to consider how difficult it is for pedestrians to cross a road. One of the main considerations relates to the number and duration of gaps in traffic which allow pedestrians to cross. Information relating to pedestrian composition, such as age, mobility etc and difficulty in crossing is also considered. In some circumstances, latent crossing demand can also form part of the assessment.

- 4.9. A survey over a 150m section Westwood Hill in the vicinity of the junction with Newlands Road and Rockhampton Avenue was undertaken on 23 May 2023 by an approved survey contractor.
- 4.10. The result of this survey indicates that the volume of pedestrians remains low when compared to other locations in South Lanarkshire. In total, 85 pedestrians were observed crossing the road over a 12-hour period from 0700hrs to 1900hrs. Of these 13 were children, 54 were adults and 18 were OAP's.
- 4.11. Westwood Hill is approximately 10m wide and using an average pedestrian walking speed of 0.9m/s it is calculated that the crossing time is estimated to be 11 seconds. The 12-hour duration of the survey was split into 5 minute segments and these identified that there were adequate gaps in vehicular traffic to allow pedestrians to cross.
- 4.12. Detailed analysis also demonstrated that out of the 85 pedestrians that crossed, 47 did not need to wait, 26 waited between 1 and 9 seconds, 7 waited between 10 and 19 seconds and finally only 5 waited for more than 20 seconds.
- 4.13. In terms of latent demand factors such as demographics and trip attractors such as bus stop, nearby shopping areas, schools etc. have also been considered. The age range of pedestrians surveyed using West Mains Road are considered to be typical for that of East Kilbride when compared to the towns mobile population based on facilities in this area.
- 4.14. From census data, approximately 60% of the town's population are adults and this compares to approximately 63% of pedestrians surveyed. While the number of OAP's and children surveyed on Westwood Hill are slightly less than the overall demographic profile for these age groups, this is expected given the expected mobility of these ages.
- 4.15. The analysis has, therefore, concluded that we remain unable to justify the introduction of controlled crossings on Westwood Hill.

Action 3 - engage with the School Crossing Patroller and other pedestrians on-site during the GAP survey

- 4.16. In addition to the GAP assessment survey, pedestrians were also observed on 1 June 2023 within the vicinity of the count location and were approached to be interviewed about their perceptions on crossing Westwood Hill. Interviews were undertaken during two sessions. These were in the morning between 0700hrs and 0930hrs and in the afternoon period between 1500hrs and 1800hrs. A total of 47 pedestrians and the school crossing patroller were interviewed during both sessions.
- 4.17. Pedestrians were asked how easy or difficult they found crossing the road. From this question approximately 40% stated it was very easy/easy/neither easy or difficult and approximately 60% stated it was difficult/very difficult.
- 4.18. From the 29 comments received approximately 34% stated that speeding traffic was a concern (this was also the view of the school crossing patroller) and 27% stated they experienced difficulty crossing at certain times of the day. Other comments received related to the road being easy to cross, difficult to cross, difficult to cross as they are disabled, volume of traffic and reference to visibility.
- 4.19. It is noted that the perception of those interviewed is that they consider Westwood Hill difficult to cross. However, this clearly contradicts the evidence collated during

the gap survey where it was demonstrated that most pedestrians did not have to wait more than 10 seconds to cross even during the peak travel times.

- 4.20. It is noted that most of those interviewed referred to feeling that vehicles were being driven at excessive speed on Westwood Hill. As referred to in Action 1, Police Scotland are committed to undertaking further speed limit enforcement action.

Action 4 - consider findings and decide upon any actions including the application of current casualty reduction policy

- 4.21. Separate papers have been presented to the Forum today which outlines the current casualty reduction policy, rationale behind it and notes an improving casualty reducing record across South Lanarkshire. Focus remains on casualty reduction in line with our duties under the Road Traffic Act 1988.
- 4.22. Our current Accident Investigation and Prevention (AIP) approach has proven successful in driving down the number of road traffic casualties across the area and, therefore, it is recommended that this current evidence led method continues to be utilised to prioritise and develop road safety interventions.
- 4.23. Subsequently, it is proposed that Westwood Hill is not deemed a suitable location to justify a special deviation from the current road safety policy which is applied to the rest of the South Lanarkshire area and that any similar petitions coming forward in response to the application of this policy are rejected.

5. Conclusions/Recommendations

- 5.1. Improving road safety in South Lanarkshire has a high priority and this is reflected in the Council's Resource Plan as well as the Local Transport Strategy where actions and policies are provided to meet the Scottish Government's casualty reduction targets.
- 5.2. The Council receives many requests for road safety improvements, and it is simply not possible to fulfil everyone. The Council also specifically assesses accident data and a significant number of priority locations have been identified where clusters of three or more injury accidents have occurred or sections of roads that have a higher than average accident rate. Our resources are, therefore, prioritised to resolve known accident locations where people are already being killed or seriously injured. This approach has resulted in a positive downward trend in accident numbers.
- 5.3. Difficult decisions must be made when prioritising improvements and it is not possible to solve every road safety issue where problems could exist. Drivers themselves, whether they are residents or those travelling through an area, need to drive in an appropriate manner and in line with their surroundings.
- 5.4. Liaison with Police Scotland has been undertaken and they have confirmed that, commensurate with their other duties, enforcement actions will continue on Westwood Hill from time to time.
- 5.5. The GAP survey indicates that there is sufficient gaps in traffic to allow pedestrians to cross to road. Therefore, at this time, there is no justification and priority for the construction and installation of a traffic signal controlled or altering the uncontrolled pedestrian crossing arrangements on Westwood Hill.
- 5.6. As outlined in section 4 of this paper, it is recommended that any similar petitions coming forward in response to the application of the Council's road safety policy are rejected.

6. Employee Implications

- 6.1. There are no employee considerations associated with this report.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1. Grant funding for accident reduction measures is limited and is prioritised to areas of proven need and is often considered within wider areas of work such as cycling or walking network development.

8. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications

- 8.1. There are no significant implications in terms of climate change, sustainability and environmental implications associated with this report.

9. Other Implications

- 9.1. There are no significant risks associated with this report.

10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

- 10.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and, therefore, no impact assessment is required.

David Booth

Executive Director (Community and Enterprise Resources)

18 May 2023

Link(s) to Council Values/Priorities/Outcomes

Values

- ◆ Focused on people and their needs
- ◆ Working with and respecting others
- ◆ Accountable, effective, efficient and transparent
- ◆ Ambitious, self-aware and improving
- ◆ Fair, open and sustainable

Priorities

- ◆ We will work to put people first and reduce inequality
- ◆ We will work towards a sustainable future in sustainable places
- ◆ We will work to recover, progress and improve

Outcomes

- ◆ Our children and young people thrive
- ◆ Good quality, suitable and sustainable places to live
- ◆ Caring, connected, sustainable communities
- ◆ People live the healthiest lives possible

Previous References

- ◆ Petitions Committee, Petition Requesting Traffic Calming Measures at Westwood Hill, East Kilbride - 19 April 2023
- ◆ Roads Safety Forum, Road Safety and Casualty Reduction - 1 November 2023

List of Background Papers

- ◆ Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030 published by the Scottish Government in February 2021

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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