

Small Improvement Schemes Advisory Leaflet

Traffic Calming



Transporting Programme Team – September 2013

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Overview

- Traffic calming is generally a number of measures introduced to control the movements of vehicles and other road traffic, most commonly, to reduce speed. This can be changes in the appearance and physical layout of road, examples being: speed humps, build-outs or coloured surfacing.
- There are a number of technical and practical issues to consider when investigating the introduction of traffic calming. Their effectiveness relies on causing inconvenience to drivers and therefore they may not always be popular.
- The introduction of traffic calming would also potentially include an increase in lighting, signs and white lining with the potential for parking restrictions.



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Carriageway Narrowing

Build outs - A build-out is a section of kerb/footway extended out into the carriageway on one side only to narrow the road. They can reduce crossing distances and improve visibility for pedestrians.

If the space is available, a gap can be left between the pavement and the build out to form a cycle bypass.

Chicane – this is generally a series of build-outs constructed on alternating sides of the road with the associated road markings. There is a prescribed distance that must be maintained between the build outs, small enough that vehicles must slow but large enough to take the largest vehicle that uses the road.

Narrowing – this can be achieved by a physical measure such as kerbs or lining. A physical measure is where the road is narrowed from both sides at the same position along the road or an island. The carriageway width can be restricted so that only one vehicle at a time may pass, or so that two cars can pass slowly.

Any carriageway narrowing will be located away from accesses and junctions.

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Carriageway Narrowing



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Raised Measures

Cushions – Raised rectangular areas and there can be one, two or three, depending on the width of the road. They are most suitable for built up areas, however, they do not slow speeds to the same extent as humps. Emergency vehicles and buses can straddle them reducing passenger discomfort.

Humps - Suitable for residential areas but are not acceptable on bus routes. The effectiveness decreases as the spacing between humps increases and should be limited to 150 metres as a maximum. These span the entire carriageway.

Tables – Similar to road humps but are longer and have a flattened top (this can be used to give pedestrians a crossing point between footways). They can also be used throughout a junction.

Raised Measures



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Other Measures

- **Gateways** – can be used at village entrances or where speed limits change. These can incorporate road markings, build-outs, coloured surfacing and/or signs indicating that the driver is entering an area where road conditions change.
- **Markings** - often used as part of gateway schemes. Rumble strips are a change in the road surface which alert the driver by a change in the sound and feel of the car. Dragon's teeth provide a visual change and narrowing of the road. Narrowing lanes using road markings can give the impression of a more confined road and results in reduced speeds.
- **Mini roundabouts** – can be flush or have a slightly raised central island, and can provide an effective form of traffic calming by reducing some vehicle speeds. They generally work best at three-armed junctions and there needs to be a reasonably large flow on all arms to be most effective.

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Other Measures



Gateway image courtesy of Google

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Locating traffic calming features

- Traffic calming in general is constructed in residential roads, outside schools and shopping areas.
- For a physical measure to be installed, the remaining road width should be sufficient for the largest vehicle expected to use it.
- Road humps not acceptable on bus routes due to reduced passenger comfort.
- Speed tables can be used throughout a junction, other physical measures generally need to be some distance away to allow vehicle to turn in or out fully.
- Carriageway narrowings and build-outs are located with consideration of vehicle accesses, although they are suitable in both urban and rural locations.
- The build-out must be visible to approaching drivers from a prescribed distance as it is a raised hazard, bollards may therefore be provided.
- Mini roundabouts should only be installed where the speed limit is 30mph or less, and where street lighting is present.

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What to expect if traffic calming is installed

- Additional hatching or markings either side of the physical measures.
- Installation of, or upgrade to the street lights in the vicinity of the physical measures.
- Additional signing.
- Additional parking restrictions or removal of existing parking bays may be necessary to ensure visibility.
- Rumble strips generate noise.
- All schemes are subject to consideration/application of the Department for Transport guidelines.
- Adjacent landowners or road users may deem themselves to be inconvenienced

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