

# Speed Tables - A Painful Solution for No Problem



## 1. Introduction

The A5074 runs through the centre of Windermere town from the A591 to the A592. It is the main road to Bowness. There is little need for an aggressive approach to speeding on the road, as there are no known cases of pedestrians being knocked over in the town centre despite a considerable number of road crossings per minute at all random points along Crescent Road. During working hours vehicles seldom exceed 10mph. This road is used both as a local distributor route and a through route. There is no other practical route that traffic can take to gain access to the areas between Windermere and Bowness without a long detour. It is also the main feeder road to the only shopper's car park. Vehicle numbers have declined on the A591 and the A5074 over the last 15 years naturally, despite local vehicle ownership increasing. The intention is to significantly reduce them further. The Crescent Road plan describes the height of the tables as shallow at 100mm. In Salford the height is 85mm. From this experience, the height in Swinton was reduced to 65mm.

There has been deception caused by referring to these vertical constructions as "Pedestrian Platforms". They are described by all in the industry as "Speed Tables". Speed tables are a large and obtrusive type of road hump, in this case higher than a normal hump and with a much larger surface area. They have two ramps each side plus more if a side road is involved. The proposal is a total of 13 up/down ramps where 10 are in alignment with the through traffic. **They serve no advantage where the speed is already below that intended by the installation (see table overleaf). They will send a message to 88% of shoppers as they arrive: You are being made uncomfortable, you are unwelcome. Do not come again.**

- Speed tables are unnecessary in Windermere as the speed in this section of the A5074 is insufficient to justify. They are proposed for the wrong reasons – to reduce shoppers arriving by private transport. 88% of shoppers (CCC figures) arrive by private transport, many from areas where buses and trains do not run.
- Dropped kerbs are a more subtle and an elegant solution being harmonious with the ambience of the town and enabling wheel chair users to be facilitated.
- Motorists will either leave the town via Elleray Road (mostly tourists) or via College Road (mostly locals) causing a reduction in the number of potential shoppers and creating a rat run.
- The hotels in areas of South Windermere/North Bowness will lose potential custom.
- The obstacles will cause a hiatus in the town with less shoppers parking in Broad Street car park.
- They are unsympathetic to the historic character and style of Windermere and will cause Windermere to lose its identity as a traditional shopping town. This planner's stated intention is to make Windermere similar to Bowness citing business closures in the process.
- **The Local Transport Plan states the following:**
- **2:34: Traffic calming on bus routes.**  
"Traffic calming measures involving speed tables should not be considered on bus routes".  
*(Policy developed to address traffic calming issues)*
- Stage Coach Bus Co. instruct drivers not to exceed 4mph over speed tables and also say that:
- New Low Floor buses which are designed to facilitate the elderly and disabled cannot be used.  
Note that speed bumps create particular discomfort to bus passengers, ambulance users and similar vehicles, because of the nature of such vehicles. This tends to discourage bus operators from running buses on certain routes, and discourages certain people from using buses, which is contrary to other social and environmental policies.

### Using Established Research

There are many documents concerning the different varieties of humps and associated objections. The following list is taken from the Objection Submissions to the London Assembly on behalf of Bromley Borough Road Actions Group. The full document can be accessed at:-

<http://www.bromleytransport.org.uk/Speed%20Hump%20Objections.pdf>

- Speed Tables/Humps are uncomfortable and painful, especially to people with disabilities. See section speed humps and medical conditions. Also TRL (Traffic Advisory Leaflet) Report 417.

- Speed Tables are a major problem for emergency vehicles such as ambulances. See section Ambulance delays. See section speed hump comfort and design.
- Speed Tables/Humps are a blunt instrument severely affecting HGV's and buses.
- Speed Tables/Humps are known to cause accidents and injuries.
- Speed Tables/Humps frequently cause damage to vehicles, even at low speeds.
- Speed Tables/Humps cause additional atmospheric pollution. See TRL report 482.
- Speed Tables/Humps encourage the use of larger vehicles.
- Speed Tables/Humps create additional noise. See TRL reports 186, 313, and 416.
- Speed Tables/Humps cost more to repair and maintain.
- Speed Tables/Humps can cause subsidence to buildings. See TRL report 416.
- Speed Tables/Humps there is little evidence that they reduce accidents. See TRL report 323.
- For each item above, also see main document.
- The advice to local authorities from the Department for Transport contained in Traffic Advisory Leaflet 7/96 is clear: highway authorities need to assess the desired mean "between hump" speed (not the speed over the hump), in order to decide what measure to use. Clearly these structures are being used insincerely as speeds are already lower than those in the table. The information is contained in the table below.

**Appropriate Road Hump Heights for Approximate "Between Hump" Mean Speeds**

Road Hump Type	Mean "Between Hump" Speed (approximately) 30mph	Mean "Between Hump" Speed (approximately) 20mph	Suggested maximum on/off ramp gradient
Round Top	50mm - 75mm	75mm	N/A
Flat Top	50mm - 75mm	75mm	1:10
Raised Junction	50mm - 100mm	75mm - 100mm	1:10
Cushion	60mm - 75mm	Without other measures may not be appropriate	1:8



Hump



Table

Note that simply slowing traffic will not bring back the quiet roads of yesteryear. But in one respect though, speed humps have truly reverted our society to a bygone age. This is the only example of where infringing the law in the UK now receives corporal punishment. If you exceed the speed limit in a road you are now chastised by pain and discomfort. The following attempts to put the arguments for and against speed humps onto a more rational basis, and includes references to much of the academic literature on this subject..... See continuation text in 22 page document, <http://www.bromleytransport.org.uk/Speed%20Hump%20Objections.pdf>

**There is now a roundabout proposed at the foot of Victoria Street.**

At present vehicles arriving from Bowness that wish to access Crescent Road, (this is quite a high proportion), can turn into Crescent Road in front of the phone boxes.

There is now proposed a new facility whereby traffic arriving via Victoria Street can leave before entering the town via Elleray Road. However, it appears the intention is to stop vehicles turning right from Main Road in front of the phone boxes and cause them to negotiate the roundabout effectively turning back on themselves nearly 360 degrees. This is unnecessary and will cause congestion as these vehicles will now be mixing with the vehicles coming down Victoria Street and wishing to exit.