

SPEED LIMITS - CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS

- (A) **VILLAGE SCHOOL 30mph SPEED LIMITS**
- (B) **A4 LOCAL SAFETY SCHEME SPEED LIMITS**
- (C) **A365 DEVELOPMENT RELATED ORDER**

Purpose of Report

1. To consider objections to the advertised proposals and to recommend the implementation of the Orders as advertised.

(A) VILLAGE SCHOOL 30mph SPEED LIMITS

Background

2. At the meeting of this Committee on 31st March 2004, Members considered the Annual Traffic Management report and resolved that 30mph speed limits would be introduced in 13 villages where the speed limit in the vicinity of the primary school was currently over 30mph or unrestricted.
3. The proposal for each village was developed in conjunction with the Police. At this stage it was considered paramount that if the lower restriction was to be observed and be effective, the motorist would have to appreciate the need for the restriction. As such, the visual impression and frontage development are important factors in the decision as to the sections on which it was appropriate to introduce a 30mph restriction.
4. The recent Government guidance on village speed limits reinforces this factor and states that a minimum of 20 properties over a 600 metre length is necessary to give the appropriate appearance and gain respect. The Committee has accepted this as the interim criteria for 30mph restrictions in villages in Wiltshire.
5. The proposals for each village were forwarded to the Parish Councils for consideration. At this stage, objections to the proposals were made by the Parish Councils regarding the schemes for Leigh, Market Lavington/Easterton and Minety.
6. These were considered by this Committee at the meeting in September 2004, when it was resolved to formally advertise the schemes as originally proposed.

Detail

7. Subsequently, the proposals have been advertised and no objections received to the proposals for the following locations and the restrictions have been introduced, or are about to be implemented:
 - Broad Town
 - Grafton
 - Horningsham
 - Kilmington
 - Leigh
 - Market Lavington/Easterton
 - Melksham Without (Sandridge)
 - Minety
 - Redlynch
 - Zeals
8. Objections and letters of support have been received to the advertisements for the following schemes. These are detailed and considered in the Appendices indicated, together with plans showing the proposals:
 - Semley - **Appendix A1**
 - Woodford - **Appendix A2**
9. Full copies of the letters are available in the **Members' Room** and from the Environmental Services Department prior to the meeting.

Main Considerations for the Council

10. Members need to consider the responses to the advertisements and, in each case, make a decision as to whether the schemes should be implemented as advertised.

Environmental Impact of the Recommendation

11. The introduction of the 30mph speed limit will require additional signing. Where it is considered to have a significant impact, this has been indicated to the Parish Council.

Risk Assessment

12. If speed limits are to be an effective tool in achieving the County Council's casualty reduction target, it is important that the criteria are adhered to so that effective limits are achieved. Otherwise, this could lead to increased disrespect for speed limits with the consequent knock-on effect on casualty targets.

Financial Implications

13. There is an allocation within the Traffic Management revenue budget for these schemes.

Options Considered

14. To introduce proposals originally prepared in conjunction with the Police and advertised.
15. To amend the proposals as requested by the objectors.

Reasons for Recommendation

16. The comments in each Appendix in respect of each site detail the reasons. It is also to ensure the most appropriate speed limits are introduced.

(B) A4 LOCAL SAFETY SCHEME SPEED LIMITS

Background

17. At the March 2004 meeting of this Committee, the Local Safety Schemes for this financial year were approved, including treatment of sections of the A4 with an above-average accident rate.
18. Following further detailed analysis of the accident pattern, it was agreed with the Police that the most appropriate action would be the introduction of lower speed restrictions. The lengths concerned were:-
 - (i) A4 west of Box
 - (ii) A4 Box to Corsham
 - (iii) A4 east of Chippenham

Detail

19. The proposals provide for:-
 - (i) the introduction of a 40mph limit on the A4 west of Box over a length of approximately 1 kilometre
 - (ii) a short extension to the current 30mph restriction east of Box and the introduction of a 50mph restriction from there to the current 40mph restriction near Copenacre at Corsham
 - (iii) the extension of the current 50mph limit east of Chippenham to just beyond the Saab garage, a distance of approximately 900 metres, and the introduction of a 40mph limit from there to east of the A342 junction, together with a 40mph restriction to cover the length of the A342 with frontage development
20. The proposals are shown on the plans at **Appendices B1 and B2**.
21. As a result of the consultation and advertisement of these proposals a number of responses have been received from County Council Members, Town and Parish Councils and the public. These are summarised together with comments in **Appendix B3**. A résumé of the conflicting comments is included in the following paragraphs.
22. Full copies of the letters are available in the **Members' Room** and from the Environmental Services Department prior to the meeting.

Main Considerations for the Council

23. The Committee needs to decide whether to implement the proposals as advertised or whether amendments should be made.

24. The length of A4 between Box and Corsham, where a 50mph limit is proposed, has an element of frontage development and junctions with limited visibility, which contribute to an above average injury accident rate. Although Corsham Town Council and Mr. Davis consider the proposal unnecessary Box Parish Council, Mrs. Seager (the local Member) and the Police consider the proposal appropriate. Mrs. Seager has indicated that she would prefer the restriction to be 40mph on Box Hill.
25. The length of A4 east of Chippenham, where a 50mph limit is proposed, between the current 50mph restriction and the proposed 40mph has no frontage development. Chippenham Town Council and Mr. Fox suggest the length should have either a 30 or 40mph restriction. The absence of significant frontage development means a lower speed restriction is unlikely to be observed by drivers. Also, the imposition of a 50mph limit on this undeveloped length would enable 40mph signs to be installed at a point where the character changes. The Police support the proposal.

Environmental Impact of the Recommendation

26. There will be an environmental impact due to the speed limit signs. However, a balance needs to be made between the requirement for the signs to be sufficiently conspicuous to be clearly seen by the motorist and the environmental intrusion.

Risk Assessment

27. If speed limits are to be an effective tool in achieving the County Council's casualty reduction target, it is important that the criteria are adhered to so that effective limits are achieved. Otherwise, this could lead to increased disrespect for speed limits with the consequent knock-on effect on casualty targets.

Financial Implications

28. There is an allocation within the Local Safety Schemes budget for this combined proposal.

Options Considered

29. To introduce the restrictions as advertised.
30. To amend the proposals as requested and readvertise where necessary.

Reasons for Recommendation

31. The comments in **Appendix B3** and above indicate why it is considered that the proposed restrictions are the most appropriate to achieve a road safety benefit and retain respect for speed limits generally.

(C) A365 DEVELOPMENT RELATED ORDER

Background

32. The construction of a new housing development adjacent to the A365 at Bowerhill, Melksham Without, has resulted in a new access being constructed and the installation of a number of new street lights along the length.

33. There was an outstanding request for the adjacent length of A365 on the list of sites to be assessed for a speed limit. The opportunity was taken to assess this length and the newly lit length together. There is some frontage development and a scheme of a 40mph throughout was proposed.
34. However, the Parish Council was concerned that a 40mph restriction on the newly lit straight section may be too low and encourage overtaking. This was accepted, particularly as no properties have direct access to the A365 on this section.

Detail

35. Consequently, a de-restriction order was proposed for the new lit length to effectively maintain the status quo, whilst leaving the section between Falcon Way and The Spa on the list for consideration in the future as part of the general review, particularly as further development is proposed for this section.
36. The proposal is indicated on the plan at **Appendix C1**. As a result of the advertisement one letter of objection has been received. This is detailed in **Appendix C2** together with comments on the points raised.
37. A full copy of the letter is available in the **Members' Room** and from the Environmental Services Department prior to the meeting.

Main Considerations for the Council

38. Members need to consider the response to the advertisement and make a decision as to whether the de-restriction order should be implemented as advertised.

Environmental Impact of the Recommendation

39. The installation of de-restriction repeaters will have minimum impact on the environment.

Risk Assessment

40. If the de-restriction order is not made for this section, the road would have restricted road status. The consequent erection of 30mph signs would lead to a devaluing of 30mph signs and a loss of their effectiveness, with a consequent knock-on effect on casualty reduction efforts.

Financial Implications

41. The works are to be funded by the Developer as part of the Highway Agreement.

Options Considered

42. To implement the order as advertised and to consider the adjoining length as part of the review of outstanding sites.
43. To not implement the order and erect inappropriate 30mph signs.

Reasons for Recommendation

44. The comments in **Appendix C2** indicate why it is appropriate to implement the order as advertised.

Recommendation

45. That:-

- (i) The village school speed limit at Woodford be readvertised as detailed in **Appendix A2**;
- (ii) The speed limits at:
 - (A) Village Schools
 - Semley
 - (B) Local Safety Scheme sites
 - A4 west of Box
 - A4 Box to Corsham
 - A4/A342 Chippenham to Derry Hill
 - (C) Development related site
 - A365 Melksham Without (Bowerhill)be implemented as advertised;
- (iii) The correspondents be informed accordingly.

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The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:

Responses to consultation and advertisements.