

REGULATORY COMMITTEE

11th JUNE 2003

**WESTBURY: OLDFIELD ROAD -
OBJECTION TO 20 mph ZONE**

Purpose of Report

1. To consider an objection to a proposed 20 mph zone Order and to recommend implementation as advertised.

Background

2. The District Council's resolution that led to the planning agreement relating to the Westbury Leigh development required the provision of traffic calming in Oldfield Road. The finalised design of the measures included the provision of a 20 mph zone for the length with frontage development.
3. The physical measures have been installed and a permanent 20 mph speed limit zone has been advertised, as shown on the plan at **Appendix 1**. One letter of objection has been received from Mr. F. Morland of Chapmanslade, and a letter supporting the 20 mph from Mr. D. Tout of Oldfield Road. These are summarised at **Appendix 2** and 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

4. The main point of objection is that the traffic calming measures and associated 20 mph zone on Oldfield Road will detract from its use as a route to relieve the overloaded A350 Haynes Lane and Warminster Road etc. of some traffic. The decision is whether to accept this premise or to implement the Order as advertised.
5. The plan at **Appendix 3** shows the area and the location of the roads concerned.
6. The Distributor Road network serving the new development at Westbury Leigh has been provided in accordance with the Development Brief for the area, and reflects the recommendations in 1998 of the Local Plan Inspector that Oldfield Road should not be one of the permanent principal access roads serving the site. (This recommendation was made in consideration of objections from local residents to a material increase in development traffic using Oldfield Road, which has a significant amount of direct frontage housing). Furthermore, the planning agreement relating to the development site required the provision of traffic calming in Oldfield Road. The purpose of the traffic calming is to act as a deterrent to traffic using Oldfield Road that could readily use alternative routes. To remove the traffic calming, and to fail to back up its intended effect with a statutory Order, might leave the authority vulnerable to legal challenge in relation to its obligations under the planning agreement.

7. Whilst it is recognised that a constraint to traffic on Oldfield Road might intensify demand on other routes, it should be recognised that traffic patterns are now established (albeit still increasing as a result of the ongoing local housing development) in this area of Westbury, and complaints have not been received. It is not considered appropriate to follow the suggestions advocated by the objector that speed limit reductions might instead be targeted at Warminster Road, Haynes Lane, West End etc., all of which are part of the A350 Primary Route through Westbury, in order to displace their traffic onto other roads in Westbury.
8. The construction of the Westbury Bypass is the means by which traffic volumes on the existing A350 through the town would be reduced. The bid for funds in the Local Transport Plan includes for appropriate measures within the town centre.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

9. The potential adverse impact on the environment of Oldfield Road, if the speed limit were not introduced and the calming measures removed, as a result of the likely increase in traffic would be more apparent than the effect on the A350 if the measures and proposals on Oldfield Road were retained.

Risk Assessment

10. The potential increase in traffic volumes on Oldfield Road if the traffic calming were to be removed and the 20 mph zone not installed could proportionally be quite high, with a consequent increase in the risk to users of the route. Conversely, the removal of a similar volume from the existing A350 route would proportionally be very small with an insignificant effect on risks along that route.

Financial Implications

11. The cost of introducing the 20 mph zone is borne by the Developer as part of the highway agreement.

Options Considered

12. As referred to in paragraph 6, if the 20 mph zone were not to be implemented, and the traffic calming removed, the highway authority could be vulnerable to a legal challenge. This is therefore not an option that can practically be considered.

Reasons for Recommendation

13. The introduction of the 20 mph zone is considered the appropriate action.

Recommendation

14. That:-

- (i) The 20 mph speed limit zone on Oldfield Road be introduced as advertised;
- (ii) It be noted that the Police have taken action in respect of the weight restriction; and
- (iii) The objector and supporter be informed accordingly.

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

Letters of objection and support