

Cabinet Member for Highways, Street Scene, and Flooding
Cllr Nick Holder

Highways & Transport

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REFERENCE: HSSF-30-24

1. THE COUNTY OF WILTSHIRE (VARIOUS ROADS, HUNTERS WOOD, MELKSHAM) (20MPH SPEED LIMIT ZONE) ORDER 2024 and 2. THE COUNTY OF WILTSHIRE (VARIOUS ROADS, MELKSHAM AND MELKSHAM WITHOUT) (40MPH SPEED LIMIT) ORDER 2024

Purpose of Report

To consider 58 representations (see Appendix 2) made in in connection with the proposed introduction of a 20mph Zone within the new Hunters Wood development on the east side of Melksham (ORDER 1) and a proposed 40mph speed limit on the extended section of Eastern Way to the east and south of the development area (ORDER 2), which connects at its western end at a new roundabout junction with Spa Road. All works are being constructed as part of the Hunters Wood development under a series of s278 and s38 Agreements.

Consultation

Consultations have been undertaken with the Fire Service, Police and Ambulance Service and also with the relevant bus companies, the Town Council and the Local Member. Advertisements have been posted in the local press and notices were posted in prominent positions at the site (see Appendix 1).

Options Considered

To:

- (i) Implement the proposals as advertised.
- (ii) Not implement the proposals.
- (iii) Implement the proposals with amendments.

Reason for Decision

To preserve and/or improve the amenity within the Hunters Wood estate, and the area through which the external link road runs by regulating vehicle speeds along both in the interests of highway safety.

Order 1

The development land south of Eastern Way, known as Hunters Wood, is a large residential area which has been designed to meet the criteria for a 20mph speed limit zone with sufficient features included to be self-enforcing. The making of the 20mph Zone Order is to allow this speed limit to be enforced even though, as noted, the physical layout of the estate is designed to keep vehicle speeds low.

Order 2

To regulate the speed along the new length of Eastern Way connecting to Spa Road and provide safe access to the Hunters Wood development. The new length of road has residential frontage development on one side but there are no direct driveway accesses to the road serving properties, with vehicular access limited to two junctions. It has a fully segregated 'shared use' path for pedestrians and cyclists along the length of its north side, with formal controlled or refuge island facilities to assist crossing movements. It is considered to meet the guidance for an urban road design speed of 40mph as set out in Circular 01/2013 'Setting Local Speed Limits'.

Representations made to the advertised Orders listed in Appendix 2 have been considered. A range of comments have been made and these are summarised as follows:

- 42nr objected to implementing a 40mph limit.
- 47nr suggested implementing a 30mph limit.
- 17nr raised concerns with pedestrians safely crossing the road with a 40mph limit.
- 12nr people wanted further barriers between link road and houses. This included barriers/landscaping/full height kerbs on link road.
- 16nr raised concern about speeding and anti-social behaviour.
- 10nr raised issue that houses they were built too close to the link road.
- 5nr raised concerns about parking on the link road or suggested parking restrictions.
- 5nr suggested further traffic calming measures (speed humps) on the link road or within the estate - 20mph zone
- 6nr suggested a 20 mph limit on the link road as either a school time restriction or fulltime.
- 2nr suggested 15 mph zone within estate.
- 2nr suggested road marking to show right of way within estate roads.
- 3nr referred to a recent single car accident on link road, where a car was speeding and flipped on to its roof.
- 1nr suggested signal control at the junction of Basil Drive/Eastern Way
- 1nr suggested a weight limit on the link road
- 2nr considered that the TRO was not advertised sufficiently
- 1nr made general comment about parking problems within Melksham generally.
- 4nr considered that the existing length of the Melksham Relief Road from Snowberry Lane to Eastern Way should be reduced to 30mph.

It is clear from the wording in the Circular that a speed limit of 40mph as proposed is appropriate as advertised, as the link clearly meets the criterion as a higher quality

suburban road or one on the outskirts of the urban area where there is little development (certainly not on both sides). Furthermore, signal controlled crossing facilities will be provided to safely cater for the 'key' cyclist and pedestrian movements that exist, notably those associated with Melksham Oak School at school start/finish times. Cyclist segregation from traffic is also provided by the 3.0m shared use path on the north side, with this set back from the road edge by a wide verge accommodating the road surface water drainage system.

Whilst some objectors raise issue with the proximity of the dwellings to the road and the lack of any barriers or landscaping buffer as reason not to implement a 40mph speed limit, it should be noted that the Circular does not specifically define what 'set back from the road' equates to an acceptable offset. There is also no other specific guidance as to what this should be 'as a minimum'.

However, in most cases there is the combined width of the verge, footway, a further 'private verge, internal service road and front curtilage providing the displacement or 'set back' between dwelling fronts and the road edge. This is not considered an unreasonable 'set back' to a 40mph urban road.

DECISION MADE

ORDER 1: I approve that the proposal to introduce the 20mph Zone covering the estate roads within the Hunters Wood development is implemented as advertised

ORDER 2: I approve that the proposal to introduce the 40mph speed limit over the new length of Eastern Way to the east and south of the Hunters Wood development is implemented as advertised.

I approve that the objectors be advised accordingly.

This decision was published on 8 November 2024 and will come into effect on 18 November 2024.

The following report and appendices are attached:

- Report- 40mph Limit and 20mph Zone TROs
- Appendix 1 - Site Notice - 40mph and 20mph Zone Orders
- Appendix 2 - Objections-Comments - 40mph Limit and 20mph Zone Orders

The following supporting documents are available from the officer named above:

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Cllr Nick Holder
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Date:.....8 November 2024.....