

**CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND WASTE –  
CLLR BRIDGET WAYMAN**

**HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT SERVICE**

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**B3107 HOLT TO MELKSHAM – PROPOSED SPEED LIMIT CHANGES**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To consider the comments received following the pre advertisement consultation on proposed changes to the speed limits on the B3107 between Holt and Melksham and to seek approval to go to formal advertisement of the proposals.

**Relevance to the Council's Business Plan**

2. The proposal meets two of the priorities in the Council's Business Plan 2017-2027. Those priorities being:
  - Priority 2 – Strong Communities. (Reduced road casualties, Reduced risk of floods, Healthier population, Good Countryside access and cycling and walking opportunities).
  - Priority 4 – Working with Partners as an innovative and effective Council – (Community involvement, Delivering together).
3. Priority 2 has been met through the pre advertisement consultation. Addressing issues raised by members of the local community will contribute towards the building of a stronger community.
4. Priority 4 has been met through engagement of the local community representatives via the pre advertisement consultation process.

**Background**

5. In May 2017 a fatal road collision took place on the B3107 when a car emerging from the Riverside MOT Centre was in collision with a northbound motorcyclist. The circumstances of the collision were subsequently investigated by the Wiltshire Coroner. Whilst the Coroner found it likely that the motorcyclist was travelling at a speed in excess of 60 mph he raised concerns about the interrelationship between traffic speeds and visibility at this location. As a result the Council was asked to undertake a review of the speed limit in the area.
6. A speed limit assessment of the B3107 from the northern Holt village boundary to Farmers Roundabout at Melksham was subsequently undertaken and this recommended that changes to the current limit should be made.
7. A copy of the proposal drawing is included at **Appendix 1**.
8. The proposal drawing was sent to Broughton Gifford, Holt, and Melksham Without Parish Councils and Melksham Town Council together with the local Wiltshire Councillor, Mr Philip Alford, to allow them to make comment if they so wished.

## **Summary of Proposals**

9. The review recommended that the limit be reduced from 60 mph to 50 mph on the length of the B3107 from the existing 40 mph terminal point adjacent to Farmers Roundabout to the western side of the Melksham Lane junction at Challymead. In addition, it was recommended that the speed limit be reduced from 60 mph to 50 mph from the Holt village boundary to the eastern side of the Old Milestone Nursery access point.

## **Main Considerations for the Council**

10. Consideration needs to be given to the comments received on the Council's proposals and whether or not changes should be made to them in light of the comments received prior to its formal advertisement in accordance with the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) process.

### **Comment from Melksham Town Council**

*Members of Melksham Town Council recently considered proposals to change the speed limit to 50 mph on stretches of the B3107 and given the number of concerns and the amount of collisions on this stretch of road, particularly on the Broughton Gifford junction at Challymead, Members felt the whole stretch of the B3107 from Farmers Roundabout to Holt not already designated 30 mph should be 40 mph in order to alleviate safety concerns and reduce the number of accidents.*

### **Comment from Melksham Without Parish Council**

*The Members felt that a speed reduction to 50 mph on this stretch of road would improve the situation. However, they wished to draw attention to the Collision Investigator's expert opinion which formed part of the coroner's report/investigation; she felt that there was insufficient view for vehicles turning right out of the MOT Centre entrance safely and in time if vehicles on the B3107 were travelling in excess of 42 mph in a northbound direction. The Parish Council would therefore like to see the speed limit reduced to 40 mph.*

### **Comment from Holt Parish Council**

*In response to the Wiltshire Council request, it is Holt Parish Council's view that the proposal ought to be revised such that the existing 40 mph limit be extended from Melksham to the Holt side of Challymead and other speed restrictions remain unaltered. This is to take into account the junction at East Lane.*

### **Comment from Broughton Gifford Parish Council**

*Broughton Gifford Parish Council would like to make it known that it fully supports the proposal of a 40 mph speed limit on the B3107. The junction from Challymead to Broughton Gifford is particularly dangerous and a slower speed limit on the B3107 would without question help lower the chances of a serious accident happening here.*

## **Officer comments**

11. The comments above indicate a level of support for a 40 mph speed limit to be introduced either in part or on the whole length of the B3107 between Holt and Melksham. Whilst this is perhaps understandable the formal review has recommended that a combination of National 60 speed Limit and 50 mph limit is appropriate and in accordance with Department for Transport (DfT) guidance.
12. Table 2 of DfT Circular 01/13 Setting Local speed Limits sets out where different levels of speed limit should apply on rural roads.

60	Recommended for most high quality strategic A and B roads with few bends, junctions or accesses.
50	Should be considered for lower quality A and B roads that may have a relatively high number of bends, junctions or accesses. Can also be considered where mean speeds are below 50 mph, so lower limit does not interfere with traffic flow.
40	Should be considered where there are many bends, junctions or accesses, substantial development, a strong environmental or landscape reason, or where there are considerable numbers of vulnerable road users

13. Circular 01/13 advises that if a speed limit is set unrealistically low for the particular road function and condition, it may be ineffective and drivers may not comply with the speed limit. If many drivers continued to travel at unacceptable speeds, the risk of collisions and injuries would increase and significant and avoidable enforcement activity would be needed. The Circular further advises that speed limits should not be used to attempt to solve the problem of isolated hazards; for example, a single road junction or reduced forward visibility such as at a bend, since speed limits are difficult to enforce over such a short length. Other measures, such as warning signs including vehicle activated signs, carriageway markings, junction improvements, superelevation of bends and new or improved street lighting, are likely to be more effective in addressing such hazards.
14. Whilst it is recognised that Challymead junction is a local point of concern in terms of collisions, works were undertaken in late 2016 to address the identified collision type and since that time there have been no collisions involving personal injury recorded. The overall collision rate for the B3107 between Holt and Farmers Roundabout is 25.03 per million vehicle kilometres, in comparison the national average for a B class road is 32.6 per million vehicle kilometres.
15. Taking the above into account it is considered that the B3107 best fits within the 50 mph and 60 mph categories set out in Table 2.
16. With regard to the Police Investigating Officer's statement that a safe right turn cannot be achieved if a northbound vehicle is travelling in excess of 42 mph, Council officers do not consider this to be the case. If a northbound vehicle approached at 42 mph, the driver of a vehicle entering the main carriageway would have approximately 4.8 seconds to complete the manoeuvre, this assumes the approaching driver on the main road does not react and continues proceeding at 42 mph. In practise, approaching drivers are likely to reduce their speed, and the time to traverse / turn onto the main road is generally under 4 seconds.
17. The Highway Code gives examples of typical stopping distances of 53 metres at 50 mph and 73 metres at 60 mph. The available visibility to / from the access is 96 metres. Typical stopping distances for motorcycles and HGVs are likely to be a little longer but still within the 96metres available.
18. In summary, although visibility from this access is less than an ideal standard, it would appear to be adequate for traffic to negotiate safely on a daily basis. This is supported by the absence of recorded injury collisions involving vehicles turning onto the main road at this location in the decades prior to the occurrence of the fatal incident in question.

#### **Overview and Scrutiny Engagement**

19. There are none with this proposal.

### **Safeguarding Implications**

20. There is no risk to the Council as a result of these proposals.

### **Public Health Implications**

21. There are none with this proposal.

### **Corporate Procurement Implications**

22. There are none with this proposal.

### **Environmental and Climate Change Considerations**

23. The proposals will result in the erection of additional signs on the public highway. At present, there are minimal signs associated with the 60 mph speed limit. A 50 mph restriction will require additional repeater and terminal signs to be installed and these can be considered detrimental to the street scene and visual vista.

### **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

24. There are none with this proposal.

### **Risk Assessment**

25. If schemes, programmed for design or delivery within the current financial year, are not progressed the Council risks the potential of delayed delivery in subsequent years due to other funding demands and uncertainty of future budget allocations.

### **Financial Implications**

26. Funding for this proposal comes from the Council's Integrated Transport Block. Should the scheme not progress, the funding would be returned to the budget allocation and would be available to be put towards other schemes.

### **Legal Implications**

27. The introduction of new speed limits requires the processing of a TRO. The process of introducing a TRO is governed by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and associated procedural regulations. Failure to adhere to the statutory processes could result in the restrictions being successfully challenged in the High Court.

### **Options Considered**

28. To:
- (i) Advertise the proposals as designed
  - (ii) Advertise the proposals with amendment.
  - (iii) Abandon the proposals.

### **Reason for Proposals**

29. The proposed limit meets the criteria set by Wiltshire Council policy and the guidance given by the DfT. The alternatives suggested by the Parish and Town Councils do not do this.

## **Proposals**

30. That:

- (i) The proposal be advertised as designed.
  - (ii) The commentators be informed accordingly.
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**The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:**

None