

Agenda Item No. 4(c)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE**

20 October 2015

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**PETITION – REQUEST TO EXTEND 30MPH SPEED LIMIT AND LOWER THE
SPEED LIMIT TO 20MPH – A608 MORLEY SMITHY**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To advise the Cabinet Member of the results of the investigations following the receipt of a petition requesting speed limit changes on the A608 at Morley Smithy, and to seek approval of the retention of the existing speed limits.

(2) **Information and Analysis** Receipt of a petition, signed by 135 people, was reported to a previous meeting on 10 February 2015 asking for the issues raised to be investigated. The petition is headed:

“Morley Primary School. Keep Us Safe. Please help us by signing our petition to have the 30 miles per hour speed limit outside of our school extended beyond Church Lane”.

A report following the receipt of this petition was presented to the meeting on 5 May 2015 (Minute No. 57/15 refers). However, a decision was deferred, pending further speed readings, after queries over the accuracy of the results.

Subsequently, the Police carried out two further speed surveys at two separate locations over a 14 day period. The average speeds recorded at these locations were 33.1mph with an 85th percentile (the speed at or below which 85% of the traffic is travelling) of 39.6mph in one direction and 31.5mph with an 85th percentile of 36.3mph in the opposing direction

Following these results, the local MP contacted Derbyshire County Council giving her support for the 30mph speed limit to be extended but also the speed limit outside the school to be lowered to 20mph.

Background

In 2008, a speed limit review was carried out on the A608 between Smalley and Breadsall. Following this review, the speed limit was reduced to 40mph between Morley Smithy and Breadsall, and reduced to 30mph at Morley Smithy.

Site Details

Morley Smithy is located on the A608 and is the main 'A' road between Heanor and its surrounding villages to Derby. The area of Morley Smithy is a street lit area with footways on both sides, and is semi-rural in character. It has a handful of residential properties, a school and a public house.

To make it clear to drivers that a reduction in speed is needed, the site has oversized 30mph signs with large yellow backgrounds, 'Reduce Speed Now' signs, flashing 'Patrol' warning signs with yellow backing boards, and a flashing speed triggered Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS). In addition to this, there is a Traffic Signal Controlled crossing with associated pedestrian guard rails, 'SLOW' markings, and a double solid white line with a significant amount of red surfacing in the centre of the road.

Officer Comment

The basis of the Petition is for the 30mph speed limit to be extended from its current position (see attached drawing HMT/RS/168/15) to beyond Church Lane, and for the section of road directly outside the school to be lowered from 30mph to 20mph. The school is concerned that where the speed limit changes from 30mph to 40mph, the 40mph signs are visible from the school, and it considers that drivers are speeding up outside the school in anticipation of this change. The school also considers that this would not happen if the signs are located in a position that cannot be seen from the school.

Effective speed regulation depends upon realistic enforcement by the Police and the perception by the general motoring public that the speed limit is appropriate for the local environment, and to the conditions and character of the road, and its environment. The 30mph signs either side of Morley Smithy are positioned on the outskirts of the more built-up area where there is a definite change from generally open field either side of the road to where the built-up village environment naturally tends to commence. Whilst the Church Lane junction is slightly beyond the 30mph signs and within the 40mph limits, the properties do not partially front onto the A608 and are well masked to drivers travelling along by their boundary hedges.

Bearing this in mind, the terminal signs are ideally located at a point where a driver can see a reason for the reduction in speed limit. This is based on the surrounding environment ahead becoming more urban, and a driver can perceive

that they are entering such an environment by the presence of a school, a public house, private access, a bend and a junction. All these factors back up the speed limit as the obvious reasons for the need to slow down.

Given that, regardless of all the traffic calming measures in place, there are still a proportion of drivers that are not adhering to the 30mph speed limit outside the school, regretfully, to further lower the speed limit to 20mph is unlikely to be neither complied with nor be self-enforcing as the Department for Transport (DfT) guidance states it should be. To extend the speed limit to a more remote rural position further away from the more built-up area is therefore also unlikely to be respected. To simply erect signs to reduce the speed limit to 20mph through the village, or indeed 30mph on the approaches into the village, would therefore not automatically ensure that speeds are reduced.

The County Council has introduced a very comprehensive package of road safety measures over previous years to address the injury collision history and to attempt to emphasise the need for those passing through the area to respect the need to drive accordingly, but it is fair to say that there is still a minority of individuals that are any less respectful. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to legislate for this minority and the road safety measures in place have proven to be effective in maintaining safety, taking into account the level of traffic passing through the area on a daily basis.

Whilst it is accepted that the local Police officers may have identified several speeding drivers, there is not a consistent relationship between the mean speed and the 85th percentile speed, regardless of all of the traffic calming measures in place. It must be understood that 85% of drivers are going no faster 39.6mph and 36.3mph.

In view of the road safety measures already in place and the appropriateness of the existing speed limit, which is entirely consistent with DfT criteria, the extension of the speed limit or the lowering of the speed limit at this location could not be supported. It is, however, recognised that targeted enforcement will continue to be beneficial and that this matter be discussed with both Derbyshire Police and the villagers. The County Council's Road Safety Team will also engage with the school to see if it can assist with any further educational training or road safety initiatives.

Local Member Comment

Councillor Carol Hart fully supports the request for a 20mph speed limit outside the school and the extension of the 30mph speed limit.

(3) **Financial Considerations** There are no financial considerations associated with this report.

(4) **Legal Considerations** The local traffic authority has power under Section 84 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to set local speed limits having regard to the guidance issued by the Department for Transport (DfT). This guidance is set out in Setting Local Speed Limits: Circular no. DfT circular 01/2013.

The procedure to be adopted when making orders under Section 84 is set out in the Local Authorities' Traffic Order (Procedure)(England and Wales) Regulations 1996 (the 1996 Regulations). The local authority must carry out a consultation and notice of the proposals must be given in accordance with Regulation 7 of the 1996 Regulations allowing at least 21 clear days for the receipt of written objections. Any objections received must be considered by the local authority.

Having considered all objections, the Council may determine to introduce the new speed limits. The order will need to be formally made and advertised and the requisite signs erected. An Order shall not be made until after the last date for objections. No Order can be made more than two years after the date of publication of the notice of the proposals. No part of a Traffic Regulation Order can come into force before the date on which it is intended to publish a notice of making.

Other Consideration

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality and diversity, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

(5) **Key Decision** No.

(6) **Call-In** It is required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(7) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officers contact details – Rachel Straw, extension 38525.

(8) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That the Cabinet Member approves that:

- 8.1 The existing 30mph speed limit on the A608 through Morley Smithy village be retained.
- 8.2. The existing 30mph speed limit on the A608 Morley Smithy is not lowered to 20mph.
- 8.3 The Local Member, MP, and the petitioners be informed accordingly.
- 8.4 The Derbyshire Police be made aware of the content of the report.
- 8.5 The Road Safety Education Team engage with the school.

Mike Ashworth
Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment



SOUTHBOUND APPROCH (FROM MORLEY HAYES)



Advanced 'Reduce Speed Now' sign, plus a bend warning sign with a special sign showing humped nature of the road on the apex of the bend.



Large 30mph terminal signs on yellow backing with 'MORLEY SMITHY' village signs on both sides of the carriageway. A permanent Vehicle Activated Sign with indicates 'SLOW DOWN' when traffic speeds exceed a certain threshold.



Large map-style direction sign with large 'Reduce Speed Now' panel above. Furth bend warning sign with a special sign showing the humped nature of the road on the apex of the bend. Central hatching to visually narrow carriageway with an associated system of road studs either side of the hatched area (see previous photos also).



'SLOW' carriageway marking.



Double white line system around the bend to enhance the danger of an overtaking manoeuvre around the blind bend. Large children/school warnings signs with yellow backing and associated twin flashing amber warning lamps on both sides of the carriageway. 'SLOW' and 'SCHOOL' carriageway markings positioned adjacent to the signs.



Large deviation of route chevron board positioned on the apex of the bend.



Large deviation of route chevron board on apex of the bend. Extensive area of carriageway hatching with solid white line system, incorporating a right-turn harbourage for side road (Brickkiln Lane).



Extensive length of pedestrian guard railing to encourage pedestrians to cross at the Pelican Crossing. Red carriageway surfacing within central hatching, bounded by solid white line system on approach to Pelican Crossing.



Pelican Crossing situated adjacent to the school with associated lengths of zig-zag markings and specialist anti-skid surfacing on the immediate approaches to the crossing point.

NORTHBOUND APPROACH (FROM DERBY)



Large 30mph terminal signs on yellow backing with 'MORLEY SMITHY – Drive with care' village signs on both sides of the carriageway.



Central hatching to visually narrow carriageway with an associated system of road studs either side of the hatched area.



Large children/school warning signs on yellow backing with associated twin flashing amber warning lamps on both sides of the carriageway.



Permanent Vehicle Activate Sign which indicates 'SLOW DOWN' when traffic speeds exceed a certain threshold.



Extensive area of central carriageway hatching on red surfacing, bounded by solid white line system, on approach to Pelican Crossing. 'Reduce Speed Now' sign, plus a bend warning sign and special sign showing the humped nature of the road on the apex of the bend.



‘SLOW’ carriageway marking on approach to the bend. Double white line system to enhance the danger of an overtake manoeuvre around the blind bend. Central carriageway hatching and deviation of route chevron board on apex of the bend.