

Agenda Item No. 4(c)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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

20 December 2018

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**A610 AMBERGATE TO COUNTY BOUNDARY AND ADJACENT ROADS
(30MPH, 40MPH, 50MPH AND DERESTRICTED SPEED LIMIT) ORDER
2018 – CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS**

- (1) **Purpose of Report** To consider the objection received in respect of the proposed Speed Limit Traffic Regulation Order on the A610 between Ambergate and the County boundary.
- (2) **Information and Analysis** The A610 connects the A6 at Ambergate with the M1 junction 26 in Nottinghamshire. The section of the A610, which is subject to a proposed change, is at Ladygrove in the village of Sawmills, close to Ripley. It is also proposed to undertake an administrative consolidation of all the previous Traffic Regulation Orders along the length of the A610 in Derbyshire. The current speed limit along the A610 from Ambergate to the County boundary is a mixture of 30mph, 40mph, 50mph and derestricted speed limits. The existing 30mph for Sawmills begins at the start of the built up environment to the east of Bullbridge and continues through to a point to the east of an access road to a Haulage depot in Sawmills and then continues into an area of 40mph. For further details, please see the top section of drawing number HMT/RS/190/16 (Appendix 1).

Part of the current 40mph includes a 230m section at Ladygrove, which has urban built-up characteristics (a number of properties directly fronting one side of the road), street lighting, footways on either-side and bus stops.

Concern has been raised by members of the public and the local Councillor Trevor Ainsworth regarding the appropriateness of the current 40mph speed limit, in Ladygrove. Officers agree that part of this 40mph is now more consistent with a 30mph limit and in line with the current Government Circular 01/2013 for the setting of local speed limits and therefore should be changed.

A statutory consultation and advertisement was consequently carried out between 25 January 2018 and 15 February 2018 to recommend a change. Detailed information, including drawings, a draft Traffic Regulation Order and

a statement for reasons for the making of the order were also available for public inspection at Ripley Library and at County Hall at Matlock. Copies of the public notice were erected at a number of locations in the area. All the residents with a frontage onto the A610 and affected by the proposed reduction in speed limit were also consulted. The proposed change to the speed limit is shown on the lower part of drawing number HMT/RS/190/16 (Appendix 1).

Responses Received

During the advertisement, five responses were received, four of which supported the proposal. One objection to the proposal was received from the Police, which is detailed below:

Police Objection

"The presence of properties along one side of the road with open fields to the other does not sufficiently convey the 30mph speed limit to motorists. The rural environment along this section is likely to undermine a 30 mph speed limit from the outset. It is suspected that the majority of drivers already travelling around 40 mph will continue to do so following any change and without suitable physical traffic calming measures being introduced there is no means of achieving the necessary reduction. Vehicle Activated Signs are engineering measures to remind drivers, however, at best these will only achieve reductions of between 1 and 1.5 mph. The A610 is all purpose trunk road and traffic flows and types reflect this of course but for a 30 mph limit to work and meet community expectations then the majority of traffic must be travelling close to it otherwise it will create a dependency on enforcement. The police cannot be expected to routinely enforce to ensure a reduced limit works -30 mph signs alone will not guarantee compliance and its unlikely general compliance will be achieved, for the reasons explained. From a police enforcement perspective there must be clear evidence from a combination of recent speed surveys and any necessary effective supporting measures that general speed compliance is achievable before any reduction takes place."

Response

The Setting Local Speed Limits Circular 01/2013 provides a national policy on the appropriate setting of speed limits and enables traffic authorities to set more appropriate local speed limits in situations where conditions dictate and that better reflect the needs of all road users, not just motorised vehicles. The 230m section of 40mph in Ladygrove has built up characteristics more suited to a 30mph speed limit, including residential properties directly fronting the road, street lighting, footways on either-side and Bus Stops. Indeed, the Government Circular makes it quite clear that 30mph should be the norm for an urban environment. There is no longer a need for fronting development to be on both sides of the road, unlike the previous criteria which existed prior to the initial changes to the legislation back in 2006.

The Derbyshire County Council Speed Management Protocol states that Vertical Traffic Calming Measures cannot be introduced where there is a high proportion of heavy goods vehicle (HGV) traffic, and it is best practice that rumble strips should not be introduced within 200m of a property due to the level of noise generated from the passing traffic. In this specific case there are properties within 20m of the edge of the road which rules out rumble strips as an option. This route is a primary route of a strategic nature, which ultimately connects to Junction 26 of the M1 in Nottinghamshire deeming it one of the most appropriate roads for all through traffic including HGV's. Therefore, the A610 Ladygrove is not suitable for the introduction of traffic calming as such measures tend to lend themselves more to roads of a lesser strategic importance.

It is not possible to accurately assess the Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) criteria as the proposed 30mph speed limit is not yet in place. The criteria for the introduction of a VAS is detailed in the Derbyshire County Council Speed Management Protocol. There are a number of criteria which must be met before they can be considered for the introduction of a VAS and these are outlined within Appendix 2 of the report. Fortunately, this location has a good collision history with no reported injury collisions over the last three years of data we have available (1 August 2015 – 31 July 2018).

The speed survey on this section of the A610 identifies an 85 percentile speed of 38mph (the speed at which 85 out of 100 surveyed drivers travelled in free flow conditions when all speeds are listed in an ascending order) and a mean speed of 34mph. This is based on the current speed limit of 40mph and indicates good compliance with the current speed limit. It is envisaged though that the proposed 30mph speed limit will see a reduction in speeds, but in light of the objection the site will of course be monitored following its implementation. It must, however, also be reiterated that the Government Circular 01/2013 does makes it quite clear that 30mph should of course be the norm for this type of urban environment.

Local Member Comment

The Local Member, Councillor Trevor Ainsworth, supports the proposal and comments:

"I fully support the reduction in speed for the length of road, the introduction of it is well overdue. I welcome the production of the report and look forward to it being presented at Cabinet in the near future."

(3) **Financial Considerations** The cost to install the signs will be in the region of £6,000 and will be met from the Highway Maintenance Revenue Budget for 2017-2018.

(4) **Legal Considerations** Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 states that it shall be the duty of every Local Authority exercising the functions in that Act (so far as practicable having regard to the matters listed below) to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway.

The matters referred to above are:

- 1) the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises;
- 2) the effect on the amenities of any locality affected and (without prejudice to the generality of this paragraph) the importance of regulating and restricting the use of roads by heavy commercial vehicles, so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the areas through which the roads run; 2ii) the national air quality strategy prepared under Section 80 of the Environment Act 1995;
- 3) the importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles; and
- 4) any other matters appearing to the Local Authority to be relevant.

Section 2 of the 1984 Act states what a TRO may provide for and this includes restricting or regulating the use of a road. Notice of proposals must be given in accordance with Regulation 7 of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 and at least a minimum of 21 clear days for the receipt of written objections must be allowed. Objections can then be considered by the Local Authority.

Regulation 14 of the 1996 Regulations enable an order making authority to modify an Order in consequence of any objections or otherwise, before it is made. Where substantial changes are to be made, the order making authority must notify those likely to be affected by the modifications, giving them an opportunity to make a representation which the Authority shall consider.

Other Considerations

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, social value and transport considerations.

- (5) **Key Decision** No.
- (6) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.
- (7) **Background Papers** Held on file with the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Lee Wright, extension 38674.
- (8) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That:
- 8.1 The Derbyshire County Council A610 Ambergate to County Boundary and adjacent roads (30mph, 40mph, 50mph and derestricted Speed Limit) – Order 2018, be made as advertised and objectors advised accordingly.
- 8.2 Officers monitor this location by undertaking a speed survey and checking collision data once the new speed limit is in place.

Mike Ashworth
Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

2 VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGNS (VAS)

2.1 Introduction

This guidance puts in place detailed procedures to be followed in considering the installation of permanent, temporary or mobile VAS.

VAS have become a popular, effective, less intrusive form of speed-reduction which can be used as an alternative to more physical measures. These are electronic signs which display a symbol and/or message when triggered by a vehicle travelling at a specific pre-set speed – the threshold speed usually being set at 10% + 2mph above the posted speed limit (e.g. 35mph in a 30mph limit). They are often introduced to supplement rather than replace traditional signing and lining, and are aimed at addressing specific road safety problems. However, note that those displaying a speed limit sign only should be set at speed limit +2mph, see criteria 2.2(b) below).

Note – refer to Table 1 in section 4 for consideration criteria

Both **permanent** and **temporary** VAS measures have been used in Derbyshire and Derby City. Research has shown that the effectiveness of permanent VAS reduces as motorists become familiar with them. The advantages of a temporary VAS is that it can be moved around between a number of sites; remaining at one site for a number of months before being moved to another site before motorists become familiar with it. The sign can then be redeployed to the same site several months later to retain its effectiveness.

VAS have been developed in Derbyshire and Derby City to address not only problems of exceeding speed limits, but also to encourage drivers to approach hazards – such as bends or junctions – at a safe speed, and to provide hazard warnings where conventional signing alone has not been effective. Analysis of existing sites has shown that, where these signs have been introduced in response to injury collision problems, they have resulted in immediate and ongoing improvements to the casualty record.

There are still relatively few signs of this nature in Derbyshire and Derby City but there are concerns that to introduce them on a widespread basis would cause drivers to become used to them and their effect would diminish. In response to these concerns we apply a stringent set of criteria to each application we receive, to guard against over-proliferation and to ensure that signs are introduced where they are most needed. This allows the Councils to determine their priorities for investment in VAS and to inform other bodies about where signs will be deployed and where installation is likely to be refused.

The protocol dictates that all of the following criteria must be met for VAS:

- 2.1(a) VAS should be considered at sites that have a **collision history associated with inappropriate speed**, or a hazard, that has not been satisfactorily remedied by standard signing. Other signing means must have been tried and have failed; the site must have been subject to a recent speed survey to determine justification for a VAS installation.

- 2.1(b) VAS displaying a speed limit should be located at sites which have a history of a **minimum of 6 injury collisions within 1km over the previous 3 years** and where speed has been a factor in some, if not all the collisions.
- 2.1(c) VAS displaying a speed limit should be located at sites where the results of traffic surveys show the 85th percentile speed is at least 10% over the speed limit +2mph, measured over a 7-day period. [The 85th percentile is the speed at which up to 85% of the traffic is travelling].
- 2.1(d) Hazard warning VAS should be located at sites which have a history of a **minimum of 6 injury collisions within 1km over the previous 3 years**, and where the hazard has been the cause.
- 2.1(e) Requests for VAS that meet these criteria should be prioritised on the basis of a calculated estimate of casualty reduction benefits.
- 2.1(f) The flexibility of temporary VAS means they are the preferred option but the decision on which type of VAS to be used should be made on a case by case basis. To retain effectiveness, temporary VAS should remain on site for **no longer than 3 months and should not be redeployed at the same site within 6 months**.

2.2 Installation and Monitoring Criteria

- 2.2(a) VAS warning of a hazard should be set to operate at the 50th percentile speed measured before installation. However, discretion may be used to change this depending on the road conditions.
- 2.2(b) VAS displaying a speed limit should normally be set to operate at 10% + 2mph above the posted speed limit (e.g. 35mph in a 30mph limit). However, discretion may be used to change this depending on the road conditions.
- 2.2(c) The section of road in advance of the VAS must be straight over a reasonable distance to maximise visibility to the sign.
- 2.2(d) There should be little or no vegetation or street furniture that will block the view of the sign or affect the working of the radar equipment.
- 2.2(e) There must be sufficient footway or roadside verge to install the sign. There must also be reasonable access to a power supply.
- 2.2(f) The sign should, wherever possible, not be intrusive to nearby residential properties and early consultation should be sought to establish residents' views. If the sign is proposed within the Peak District National Park, early consultation with the National Park Authority should be sought.
- 2.2(g) VAS displaying a speed limit should be located between 100 metres and 200 metres beyond the start of the posted speed limit sign, except in

urban areas with street lighting where a 30mph speed limit operates and where repeater signs are not allowed.

- 2.2(h) VAS warning of a hazard should be located between 50 metres and 100 metres in advance of that hazard.
- 2.2(i) Permanent VAS should be routinely inspected every six months and provided with regular maintenance, such as cleaning the sign face, removing any obstructing foliage and ensuring that the vehicle detection system is functioning correctly.
- 2.2(j) All VAS installations should be monitored for effectiveness by regular analysis of speed data and collision records. Any that are considered ineffective should be removed.

2.3 Permanent and Temporary VAS - Funding by Borough, District or Parish/Town Councils

Where a local council has requested a VAS, which meets criteria for inclusion in the County Council's programmes but is a low priority for installation at the County Council's expense, then the local council may fund the installation. The Funder must undertake to be responsible for all costs, including long-term maintenance for the life of the installation, and removal if required. All selection, installation and monitoring criteria above will apply, with the exception of criteria 2.1(e).

2.4 Mobile VAS

Mobile VAS differ from temporary VAS as they are completely mobile and do not require pre-prepared sites, and may be deployed in locations which would not meet the criteria for permanent or temporary sites. Currently, there are no mobile VAS operating, but are included as they may be employed in the future. Decisions on where they may be deployed, and the length of deployment, should be taken through established selection and consultation procedures of the sign's owner, either the County Council, Derby City or Derby and Derbyshire Road Safety Partnership. The owner may seek contributions to costs from the local council requesting the installation. In no circumstances should mobile VAS be deployed for longer than the three month limit applying to temporary installations.

3 TRAFFIC CALMING/SPEED REDUCTION MEASURES

Derbyshire County Council and Derby City, as local Highway Authorities, are committed to the reduction of casualties on their highway networks. There are a number of traffic calming measures available to help reduce traffic speeds, and discourage inappropriate through traffic, in order to achieve casualty reduction on our roads.