

Agenda Item No. 4(a)

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORT AND
INFRASTRUCTURE

9 May 2019

Report of the Strategic Director – Economy, Transport and Environment

**PETITION REQUESTING TO CHANGE THE SPEED LIMIT FROM 40MPH
TO 30MPH – A6187 HOPE ROAD, HOPE VALLEY**

(1) **Purpose of Report** To inform the Cabinet Member of the investigations carried out following receipt of a petition requesting the consideration of a lower speed limit of 30mph on the A6187 Hope Road, from Sickleholme towards Hope, Derbyshire.

(2) **Information and Analysis** Receipt of the petition was acknowledged by the Cabinet Member on 11 October 2018 (Minute No.90/18 refers). The petition contains 128 signatures and reads as follows:

“We the undersigned request that Derbyshire County Council reduce the speed limit on A6187 Hope Road in Hope Valley Derbyshire, on the stretch where it is currently 40mph (from Sicklehome towards Hope) to 30mph, and take measures to enforce a 30mph speed limit.”

A supporting letter, along with a number of other documents, have been received from the lead petitioner that indicate that safety issues are being encountered by local residents. It is stated that speeding vehicles create an unsafe environment for vulnerable road users crossing the road, damage is being caused to property and the rail bridge has been struck several times. Many residents have limited visibility when emerging from their driveways and they feel unsafe when exiting onto a high speed road. Noise is generated by high speeds that causes disturbance to the residents. The lead petitioner noted that similar roads nearby have speed limits of 30mph that carry less traffic.

It is acknowledged that the petition has involved a large amount of effort from the lead petitioner and local residents, who have demonstrated concerns for the safety of all road users, and the opinion that this stretch of road is more suitable for a 30mph limit.

Officer Comments

The A6187 is classed as a Principal Route within the existing road hierarchy in Derbyshire and, as such, carries a volume of traffic of around 10,000 vehicles over a 24 hour period. Hope Road is within a network of strategic routes, linking onto the A6013 into Bamford, and onto the A57 for access to major transport corridors.

The report considers the request for a 30mph speed limit, by following guidance set out by the Department for Transport (DfT), the Derby and Derbyshire Road Safety Partnership's Speed Management Protocol alongside local community concerns raised within the petition.

The criteria specified above provide transparency in the Council's decision making processes, and a facility that provides a consistent appraisal method for requests when reviewing speed limits. Core to the process are speed limits that are evidence-led, self-compliant and seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel.

Speed Limit Review

To get a better understanding of how traffic is travelling along the A6178 corridor, traffic counts and speed readings have been taken at various locations along the A6178 corridor (Table 1). The mean speeds provide evidence to what the suitable speed limits should be, as mean speeds are used in the DfT guidance for setting of local speed limits. The locations in Table 1 are where data collection took place over a week long period, with Sheffield Road and Castleton Road taken in September 2017 and Hope Road in March 2018;

- Sheffield Road, Hathersage (near Broadwood),
- Castleton Road, Hathersage (east of rail bridge),
- Castleton Road, Hathersage (at Jagger's Lane),
- Hope Road, Hope Valley (east of Rising Sun Development).

Table 1 Speed Readings

Location	Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) (24 hour count)	Mean Speeds	Current Speed Limit
Sheffield Road, Hathersage (near Broadwood)	9,914	33.4mph	30mph
Castleton Road, Hathersage (east of rail bridge)	9,962	39.8mph	30mph
Castleton Road, Hathersage (at Jagger's Lane)	9,863	33.3mph	30mph
Hope Road, Hope Valley (east of Rising Sun)	9,962	39.8mph	40mph

General guidance for speed tolerances are 10% above the posted speed limit so 33mph for a 30mph limit and 44mph for a 40mph limit. The speed readings along the A6178 corridor suggest that the current speed limits, with the exception of those east of the rail bridge in Hathersage, are appropriate for the highway environment, with the mean speeds being within the accepted tolerance for setting of local speed limit guidance. The evidence in Table 1 is demonstrating that drivers are aware of the prevailing conditions on the highway and drive accordingly to speed limits in place.

The readings at Castleton Road, Hathersage show excessively high approach speeds into the village and this will be brought to the attention of the Police, who are the only body that can enforce speed limits.

The key to a speed limit being successful is that it should accurately reflect the environment through which the road is passing and that drivers can make that correlation. 30mph zones are generally built-up areas with development in depth on both sides of the road, frequent accesses and heavy pedestrian activity, typically town centres and residential estates. 40mph speed limits are also built-up areas but, less so, and this is commensurate with this section of the A6178. This is why existing speeds on the Hope Road are more conducive to a 40mph speed limit.

It has to be understood that merely lowering a speed limit does not mean that traffic speeds will follow. The 85thile speed of traffic (the speed at or below which 85% of traffic is travelling) for the three 30mph locations in Table 1 range from 38.4mph to 46.1mph, showing significant non-compliance. The 85thile speed at the Hope Road Site is 46.0mph, showing greater compliance with the 40mph speed limit.

Collision Review

The Police's collision database shows that, during the latest three year period (standard test period) from 1 February 2016 to 31 January 2019, two collisions have been recorded throughout the 40mph section of the A6187 that have involved personal injury. One of these involved a cyclist at the Sickelholme traffic lights and the other was a rear-end shunt at the Thornhill Lane junction. Neither of these have been classified as being speed-related.

In terms of collision rates, the national average collision rate for an A road is 30 per 100 Million Vehicle Kilometres (100MVKM). This covers all severities. This rate is taken from the Reported Road Casualties Great Britain Annual Report 2017 published by the Department for Transport. The average collision rate on this section of the A6187 (from its junction with the B6049 to its junction with the A6013, a 2.6km length) is 21.22 per 100MVKM. Therefore, nationally, this section of road is below average in terms of collision rates for all A roads. Within Derbyshire, the latest route analysis of other A and B road links in the County ranks this at No 221.

As a means of comparison, the other sections of the A6187 have collision rates as follows:

- Castleton to the B6049 – 13.68 per 100MVKM (Ranked 287)
- A6013 to B6001 – 10.59 per 100MVKM (Ranked 300)
- B6001 to County Boundary – 35.46 per 100MVKM (Ranked 113)

It is understood that “near misses” can occur at times and, unfortunately, this is the case in many locations across the network. Damage only collisions also take place on the network, but, due to the nature of these incidents, these rarely form part of the collision investigation process due to the lack of reliable data available. It is a legal requirement to report injury related collisions to the Police which enables relevant information to be recorded using the police STATS19 reporting system. This allows the causation factors to be recorded which facilitates effective collision remedial measures being identified.

The authority constantly monitors collisions across the network and identifies remedial measures where appropriate. As would be expected on a route of this nature, traffic engineering measures have been implemented along its length over the years. This includes double white line systems, warning signing and anti-skid surfacing. The County Council strives to reduce casualties as best it can and the latest Derby and Derbyshire Annual Casualty Report gives some detail on the work that is being done in this respect.

Enforcement Review

The petition requests that a lower speed limit should be introduced and regularly enforced. DfT guidance specifies that, in cases where there are or anticipated to be high-levels of non-compliance, it would tend to indicate that the speed limit is unclear and/or not appropriate.

From a Police perspective, rather than a need for high levels of enforcement and prosecution, which requires a significant level of resource, proposed speed limits should only be implemented where they would require minimal enforcement attention.

It is usual that the Police would request physical engineering measures (e.g. traffic calming) where existing mean speeds are outside the accepted tolerances for the speed limit being proposed.

It also has to be borne in mind that speed enforcement is expensive; it is both time and resource intensive and has to compete with other policing issues of equal or greater public concern. Therefore, the Police would only support the lowering of a speed limit where it would be largely self-enforcing, meaning enforcement action would be mainly reactive and not seen as a preventative measure to achieve good compliance.

Gaining Police support is important in respect to future enforcement levels. It is a consistent view of the Police that they would expect to see mean speeds within 10% of the proposed speed limit. Hope Road currently has speed data showing a mean speed of 39.8mph which is significantly above what the Police would accept as satisfactory for levels of enforcement for a 30mph speed limit.

To change a speed limit requires the making of an Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. This involves formal consultations, legal notices and a considerable amount of legal and traffic management staff time. Initial discussions with the Police indicate that they would not support a reduction of the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph along this particular stretch of road.

Officers' Conclusion

By setting or reviewing any speed limit, the aim is to achieve appropriate driving speeds that encourage a safe road environment.

Inappropriate speed limits can lead to frustration for motorists if the limits are unrealistic and frustration to residents if not adequately enforced. Motorists can become impatient if they consider a 30mph speed limit to be unsuitable within the highway environment they are travelling through, potentially looking to overtake at locations on the highway that could be dangerous at times, especially to vulnerable road users. Evidence by ROSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) shows that inappropriate speed magnifies other driver errors, such as driving too close, that multiply the chances of this type of driving causing a collision.

Officer views are that it would be counterproductive if a 30mph limit is introduced on Hope Road at the present time. Such a limit would not be commensurate with the national guidance on setting 30mph speed limits. Compliance with the speed limit would be low which would present the Police with an unreasonable enforcement task.

Should the environment change on Hope Road by way of development that will see property frontages change the characteristics, the need for a lower speed limit could then be reassessed at that time.

Enhancing the entry signs and carriageway markings leading into the 40mph zone could help to raise awareness of the change in speed limit which will help aid compliance in general. Therefore, it is proposed to carry out such work in the current financial year.

Local Member Comment

Councillor Jim Perkins is aware of the petition and the Officer's Recommendations and has not commented.

(3) **Financial Considerations** Enhancing the signing and lining at the change in speed limit would cost in the region of £500 which would be met from the Traffic Management Revenue Budget for 2019-20.

Other Considerations

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

(4) **Key Decision** No.

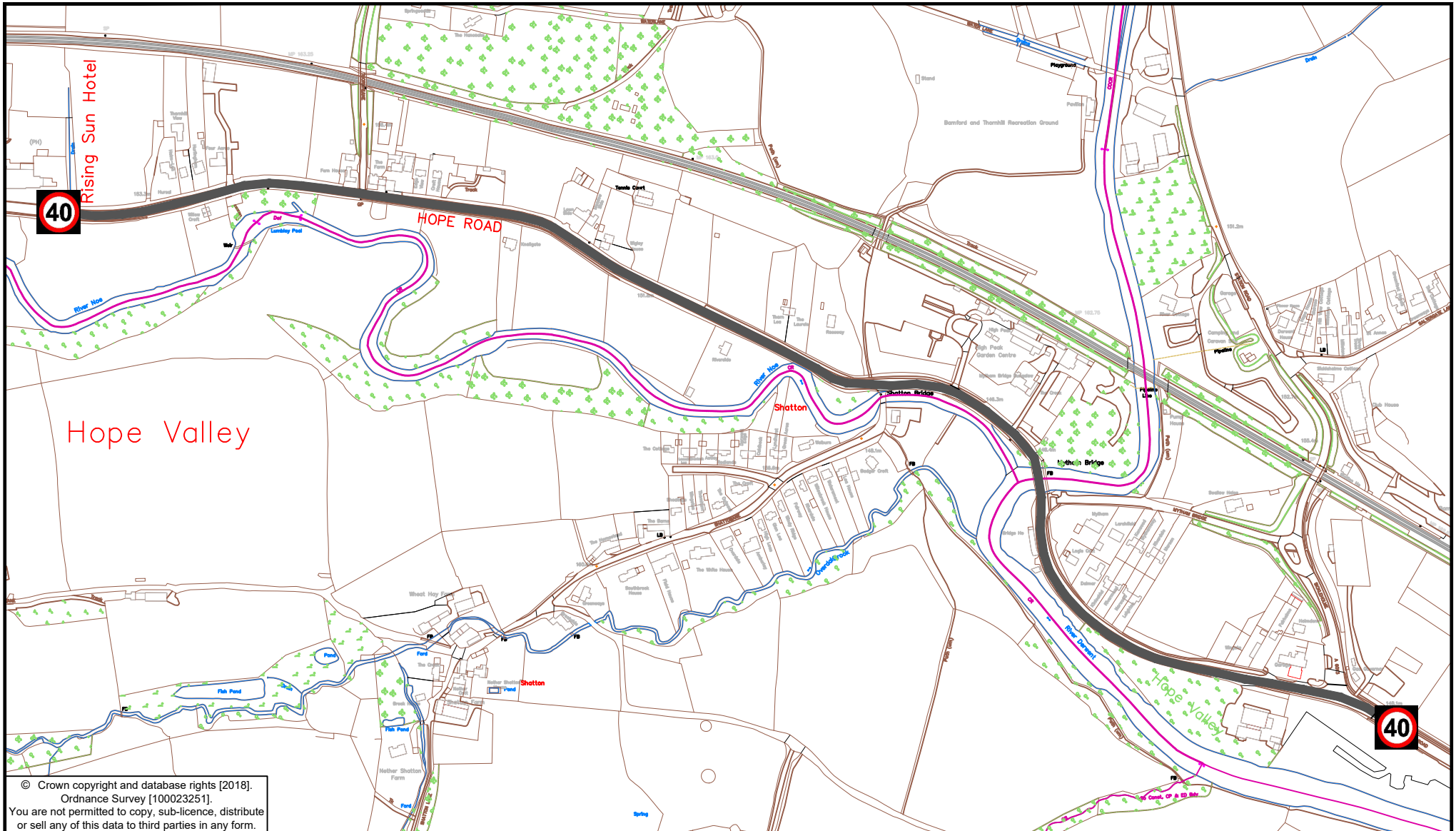
(5) **Call-In** Is it required that call-in be waived in respect of the decisions proposed in the report? No.

(6) **Background Papers** Held on file within the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. Officer contact details – Steve Alcock, extension 38761.

(7) **OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATIONS** That:

- 7.1 The situation continues to be monitored at the A6187 Hope Road, Hope Valley and any future action be taken where appropriate in accordance with current national guidance.
- 7.2 The speed limit signing at the change in speed limit near The Rising Sun Public House be reviewed with a view to creating a "gateway" feature.
- 7.3 The lead petitioner and local Member be informed accordingly.

Mike Ashworth
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MIKE ASHWORTH
Strategic Director
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AMENDMENT DETAILS

BY	CHKD	APVD	DATE	NO.

PROJECT TITLE		DRAWN	CHECKED	APPROVED
Cabinet Report Drawing		T_TURNER	S_BULLEN	S_BULLEN
DRAWING TITLE		Date	Date	Date
Hope Road, Hope Valley		15/03/19	15/03/19	15/03/19
		Project / Confirm Reference No.	N/A	
		Drawing Number	N/A	
		ORIGINAL DRAWING SIZE 297 x 210 (A4)		SCALE
				NTS