

Meeting date: Monday 28th November 2022

Report to: Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure

Report title: Borough Wide Speed Limit - Review of Representations

Report from: Paul Tovey – Head of Highway Management

Report author/lead contact officer: David Keaney – Traffic Manager

Wards affected:

All Wards | Bickenhill | Blythe | Castle Bromwich | Chelmsley Wood |
 Dorridge/Hockley Heath | Elmdon | Kingshurst/Fordbridge | Knowle |
 Lyndon | Meriden | Olton | Shirley East | Shirley South |
 Shirley West | Silhill | Smith's Wood | St Alphege

Public/private report: Public

Exempt by virtue of paragraph: NA

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Department for Transport advises Local Highway Authorities to review speed limits due to changing circumstances and to consider 20 mph limits and zones in urban areas and village streets.
- 1.2 A review of the Borough's speed limits was undertaken during 2021. The study identified roads where lower speed limits would be appropriate. The aim of the changes was to achieve safe and appropriate driving speeds and preserve or improve the local amenity.
- 1.3 On 3rd June 2021, Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure approved the changes, subject to the statutory consultation process.
- 1.4 This report considers the representations received during consultation; provides a technical response to the points raised and recommends the preferred way forward.

2. **Decision(s) Recommended**

2.1 The Cabinet Member is asked to.

- (a) Note the proposed changes to speed limits as set out in Appendix A and shown on the plans in Appendix B.
- (b) Note the representations received to the proposed speed limit changes and the officer's technical responses as set out in section 3 of Appendix C.
- (c) Approve the proposed speed limit changes, notwithstanding the objections received, as advertised, and set out in Appendices A and B.

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3. Matters for Consideration

- 3.1 In 2021, a review of speed limits across the Borough was completed. This review, undertaken in accordance with Department for Transport Guidance, identified roads where changes in use, behaviour and or layout supported the need for a lower speed limit.
- 3.2 To amend a speed limit, it is necessary to follow the statutory Traffic Regulation Order legal process. Three separate Traffic Regulation Orders were prepared for the proposed new 20mph, 30mph and 40mph speed limits. The overall aim of the reductions was to achieve safe and appropriate driving speeds or improve the local amenity.
- 3.3 The proposed changes were formally advertised on 14th July 2022. A list of the roads affected, and a copy of the individual location plans are contained in **Appendices A** and **B**. A statutory 21-day public consultation commenced on this date, providing an opportunity for representations to be submitted.
- 3.4 The Authority must fully consider all representations received as part of the statutory consultation process prior to determining and implementing any proposed changes.
- 3.5 When considering the representations received, the Council may:
- Decide not to proceed with the proposal
 - Amend the proposals by reducing the extent or effect, or
 - Implement the proposal as originally advertised.
- 3.6 It is not possible to include additional restrictions or locations as part of this process as the alternative proposal would need to be re-advertised for the 21-day statutory period.

4. What options have been considered and what is the evidence telling us about them?

- 4.1 The closing date for representations was 4th August 2022. In total, 41 separate representations were received, relating to the following 44 individual elements which are summarised below and considered in detail in Appendix C.
- 4.2 2 representations were received in response to the proposed 40mph speed limit changes in the Meriden Ward. One was fully supportive and the other objected.
- 4.3 17 representations were received in response to the 30mph proposals. 13 in favour, 2 objections and 2 requests for additional measures. Comments received in favour also sought clarification on future enforcement of the lower speed limits whilst 2 comments requested additional changes to speed limits. The first on Houndsfield Lane, Tidbury Green and the other on Smiths Lane, Bentley Heath.
- 4.4 25 representations were received in response to the 20mph proposals. 17 in favour (of which most had additional questions or requests), 1 was neither supportive or against

but had questions and requests and 7 were objections (3 of these had additional questions or requests). The proposal to introduce a village wider 20mph speed limit in Dickens Heath generated feedback from the Parish Council and Dickens Heath Residents' Association. The Parish Council were supportive of the proposals in principle, both parties would have welcomed additional engagement and consultation prior to and in addition to the consultation. The Residents' Association also highlighted a few general concerns related to the approach and impact of a village wide initiative. These comments and details of the technical responses are set out in section 3 of **Appendix C**.

5. Reasons for recommending preferred option

- 5.1 The proposed reduction in speed limits on those roads detailed in Appendix A are in line with guidance and recommendations provided by the Department for Transport to local authorities to assist in the setting of local speed limits.
- 5.2 The introduction of 40mph speed limits received the lowest level of interest from road users. This was to be expected as the proposals focus on roads which have a semi-rural characteristic with few residential properties in the immediate vicinity. They are intended to provide an appropriate and consistent limit for the roads in question with reference to their layout, use and surrounding area. This is intended to aid driver understanding and compliance of the speed limit and ultimately aid traffic flows and improve road safety.
- 5.3 The proposed 30mph speed limits were generally well supported, however, in several locations, requests were received to extend or cover additional roads as part of the Order. As set out in section 3.6 of this report, it is not possible to progress such requests as part of the advertised order. It is proposed that these locations are fed into the next review of speed limits expected to take place in the next 3 to 5 years.
- 5.4 The proposed 20mph speed limits are in line with the Council's policy. The strong level of representations received demonstrates the general support for the principle of using 20mph limits on appropriate roads. Whilst many respondents would like to see more 20mph roads, a few objections were received to the proposals demonstrating the continued need for a considered approach to the roll out of 20mph limits across the borough.

6. Implications and Considerations

- 6.1 State how the proposals in this report contribute to the priorities in the [Council Plan](#):

Priority:	Contribution:
People and Communities: 1. Improving outcomes for children and young people in Solihull.	People and our local communities are at the heart of our speed management priorities. Solihull has one of the safest local road networks in the country and this means that People have a greater chance to take the

Priority:	Contribution:
<p>2. Good quality, responsive, and dignified care and support for Adults in Solihull when they need it.</p> <p>3. Take action to improve life chances and health outcomes in our most disadvantaged communities.</p> <p>4. Enable communities to thrive.</p>	<p>opportunities that are available to them in a safe and sustainable way.</p>
<p>Economy:</p> <p>5. Develop and promote the borough's economy, with a focus on revitalising our town and local centres.</p> <p>6. Maximising the opportunities of UK Central and HS2.</p> <p>7. Increase the supply of affordable and social housing that is environmentally sustainable.</p>	<p>There are strong links to the local economy and the effective performance and operation of the highway network. Inappropriate speeds can create delay, increase the risk of a serious road traffic collision from occurring as well as discouraging use by vulnerable road users. As such improving compliance and reducing vehicle speeds have the potential to contribute towards maintaining a health borough economy.</p>
<p>Environment:</p> <p>8. Enhance our natural environment, improve air quality and reduce net carbon emissions.</p>	<p>The type of environments through which a highway passes can play a huge part in helping aid compliance of speed limits to an extent often greater than posted speed limits. Therefore, establishing the correct environment around our highway assets has the greatest potential to set appropriate vehicle speeds depending on the function of the road in question.</p> <p>Reducing vehicle speed can promote and encourage active forms of travel, reducing car reliance and therefore can contribute towards air quality and carbon emission targets.</p>
<p>9. Promote employee wellbeing</p>	<p>Reduced speeds can encourage and facilitate active travel by making our roads and streets more attractive for journeys by foot and cycle both of which can have a positive impact of health and wellbeing.</p>

6.2 Consultation and Scrutiny:

- 6.2.1 In January 2021, a report entitled Speed Enforcement in Solihull – A new Approach was taken to the Stronger Communities & Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Board. This report as a joint report with West Midlands Police considered the approach taken with regards to speed limit management and enforcement, which the Board supported.

6.2.2 A statutory Traffic Regulation Order consultation exercise took place between 14th July and 4th August 2022. This process provided an opportunity for all stakeholders, residents, and road users to feed into and comment on the proposed speed limits.

6.2.3 Representations were received from a range of stakeholders including members of the public, ward members parish councils and resident's associations.

6.3 Financial implications:

6.3.1 The changes to speed limits proposed as part of this review are fully funded through a £29,000 capital allocation from the Council's Local Network Improvement Plan (LNIP) part of the City Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRST) which has been carried forward from the 2021/22 financial year. This capital allocation will fund all necessary changes to permanent signage and lining associated with the proposed changes.

6.4 Legal implications:

6.4.1 None because of the recommendations of this report.

6.4.2 The setting of local speed limits will follow a defined legal process to ensure successful prosecution in the event anyone is caught exceeding the maximum speed limit.

6.4.3 The necessary Traffic Regulation Orders to facilitate the proposed changes have been advertised in accordance with The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 2012. The proposal orders being advertised on the 14th July 2022.

6.5 Risk implications, including Risk Appetite:

6.5.1 None identified as a direct result of this report.

6.6 Equality implications:

6.6.1 None at this stage in the process and generally in terms of speed limits and enforcement then these apply equally to every motorist.

6.7 Linkages to our work with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), Local Enterprise Partnership or the Birmingham & Solihull Integrated Care System (ICS):

6.7.1 The recommendations resulting from this paper have the potential to positively contribute to regional road safety targets as set out in the WMCA Regional Road Safety Partnership.

7. List of appendices referred to

7.1 Appendix A – List of Roads where changes to the existing speed limit are proposed.

7.2 Appendix B – Plans of roads where changes to existing speed limits are proposed.

7.3 Appendix C – Summary of representations received to proposed speed limit changes.

8. Background papers used to compile this report

- 8.1 20mph Speed Limit Review – Next Steps (12th July 2022 Cabinet Report to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure).
- 8.2 Speed Limits in Solihull – A Review and Approach to the use of 20mph limits (3rd June 2021 Cabinet Report to the Cabinet Member for Environment and Infrastructure).

9. List of Other Relevant Documents

- 9.1 Department for Transport Circular 01/2013 – Setting Local Speed Limits.