

<b>DECISION MAKER:</b>	<b>Acting Assistant Director Highways and Transport</b>
<b>DECISION DATE:</b>	<b>21 February 2019</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>Consideration of a Reduction of the Existing 40 mph Speed Limit to 30 mph on the B4355 at Titley and a Reduction of the National Speed Limit to 30 mph on School Lane, Green Lane and Eywood Lane at Titley.</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>Graham Hornsby, (Network Regulation Team - Balfour Beatty Living Places)</b>

## **Classification**

Open

## **Key Decision**

This is not a key decision

## **Wards Affected**

Arrow

## **Purpose**

To consider the appropriateness of the existing 40 mph speed limit on the B4355 through Titley with a view to reducing it to 30 mph and to review the current National Speed Limit for its suitability for the environment on the U91600 Green Lane, U91601 School Lane and the U91602 Eywood Lane.

The extent of the review is set out in drawing 3409-52 at Appendix A.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**THAT:**

**The existing 40 mph speed limit on the B4355 remains unchanged and the existing National speed limits on the U91601 School Lane, the U91600 Green Lane and the U91602 Eywood Lane remain unchanged.**

**AND**

**That a portion of the budget allocated to the implementation of speed limit orders and**

**associated sign works be allocated to enhance the existing 40 mph speed limit terminals and to improve the bend warning signage in the vicinity of The Stagg Inn.**

## **Alternative Options**

1. That the existing speed limits on the B4355, U91600 Green Lane, U91601 School Lane and U91602 Eywood Lane in Titley are reduced to 30 mph and / or the proposed enhancements to the speed limit terminal signs and bend warning signs are not implemented.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

2. The recorded 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds and the prevailing roadside environment on the B4355 as it passes through Titley as discussed in Key Considerations below are considered not to support the introduction of a 30 mph speed limit.
3. Given the topography of the U91600 Green Lane, U91601 School Lane and the U91602 Eywood Lane, it is unlikely that the motorists travelling on these roads would drive at speeds exceeding 30 mph and this is evident from the recorded 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds on School Lane being less than 27 mph. Reducing the speed limit on these roads to 30 mph could create a situation whereby the drivers perceive the 30 mph speed limit as a safe speed or target speed to drive at regardless of the road conditions leading to an increase in speeds. It is therefore not recommended to reduce the speed limit on the U91600 Green Lane, U91601 School Lane and U91602 Eywood Lane from its current National Speed Limit to 30 mph.

## **Key Considerations**

4. In July 2011, a review of all the existing speed limits on A and B class roads in Herefordshire identified that the current speed limit of 40 mph on the B4355 through Titley would benefit from an assessment for its suitability for the environment. As a natural consequence of a review on the B4355, it was considered prudent to also review the current National Speed Limit for its suitability for the environment on the U91600 Green Lane, U91601 School Lane and on the U91602 Eywood Lane as shown in Appendix A.
5. As a result of their entry into the prioritised traffic regulation order waiting list, these roads were identified for commencement of investigations in the 2018/2019 Annual Plan. Consequently, these roads have been assessed in detail.
6. Department for Transport Circular 01/2013 – Setting Local Speed Limits is the primary guidance document that was referred to when assessing the suitability of the prevailing speed limits at each of these roads.
7. One aim of a speed limit is to encourage drivers to travel at about the same speed which has shown to reduce the likelihood of collisions. However, to achieve this, speed limits have to be evidence led and not set unrealistically low. The roadside environment is a key source of evidence to responsible drivers in influencing the chosen speed. Hence, the roadside environment and topography of the B4355, U91600 Green Lane, U91601 School Lane and U91602 Eywood Lane in Titley have been assessed in the following paragraphs. The current signage on the B4355 is detailed in Appendix B.
8. The extent of the B4355 which is subject to a speed limit of 40 mph; through Titley Village is approximately 1.1 kilometres in length. The extent under review on the U91601 School Lane, the U91602 Eywood Lane and the U91600 Green Lane is in total approximately 950 metres and is all subject to the National Speed Limit.

9. The B4355 is a single carriageway with a width of approximately 6.8 metres throughout. There are five junctions with adopted roads along this section. Starting from north to south, these junctions are with the:-
- U91604 Horseway Head
  - U91417 The Forge
  - U91601 School Lane
  - U91600 Green Lane
  - U91602 Eywood Lane
10. The current 40/National Speed Limit terminals on the northern end of the B4355 through Titley are located under a tree canopy which appear to somewhat obscure the visibility to these terminals.
11. Beyond these terminals in the southbound direction, the B4355 is characterised by noticeable bends with downhill gradient to the junction with School Lane. This section provides connections to the U91604 Horseway Head and the U91417 The Forge and to footpaths (Titley Footpaths 10 and 11).
12. This section also provides direct access to five private dwellings and a field. Only one dwelling is visible from the roadside.
13. The B4355 then straightens for 390 metres. It provides access to 13 houses, St Peter's Church, junction with U91601 School Lane and The Stag Inn Public House. Some of these dwellings are visible from the roadside and appear to have sufficient on-site space for the cars to turn around to exit the properties in forward gear. There is also a layby for 70 metres on the east side of the road. There is a footway on the east side of the road for 310 metres and a footway on the west side for 165 metres.
14. Past the Public House, the B4355 is characterised by a left-hand bend for 120 metres and has a junction with U91600 Green Lane and U91602 Eywood Lane. The B4355 is then relatively straight for approximately 188 metres and provides two accesses to a farm and associated buildings.
- U91600 Green Lane, U91601 School Lane, U91602 Eywood Lane
15. The U91601 connects to the B4355 at a priority junction. The road is approximately 5.3 metres in width. The U91601 travels southwest for 180 metres and is relatively straight. There is a war memorial at the junction with the road splitting around it. The U91601 provides access to five houses on the north side of the road where there are bollards along the length of the road to protect the verges from vehicles. There is also access to a field and a layby approximately 35 metres in length which can be used as a passing place or for parking. The U91601 then meets a junction with U91600 Green Lane.
16. The U91600 Green Lane travels north for 175 metres with a width of approximately 3.8 metres. It is characterised by a slight left-hand bend and provides access to two houses and a field which connects to Titley Footpath 12. The access to the field and driveway entrances can be used as passing places.

17. South of the junction with U91601 School Lane, the U91600 Green Lane is 188 metres in length with a width of approximately 3 metres, where it meets the B4355 at a junction by The Stag Inn Public House. This section of the U91600 provides access to Titley Village hall and car park and rear access (staff only) to the Public House, and access to one field. The lane is a single track lane with no street lighting on footways.
18. The U91602 travels west for approximately 310 metres to Point G. The U91602 has a width of approximately 5.3 metres. The U91602 is characterised by a right-hand bend for 102 metres and then the road is relatively straight. The U91602 provides access to five houses and fields which connects to Titley Footpath 5. There are passing places, and the driveway entrances can be used as passing places. The lane is a single track lane with no street lighting or footways.

The recorded 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds

19. Seven-day volume and speed surveys were undertaken in June 2018 as set out in the chart below (see Appendix C for locations): -

	Northbound (85 <sup>th</sup> percentile speed)	Southbound (85 <sup>th</sup> percentile speed)
Location 1 – B4355 (Between Horseway Head and The Forge)	43.5 mph	48.4 mph
Location 2 – B4355 (Between School Lane and Green Lane)	41.4 mph	43.4 mph
Location 3 – U91601 School Lane	26.2 mph	25.8 mph

20. These surveys established the existing 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed which is a key statistic when deciding on an appropriate speed limit. Research has shown that the safest and the most responsible drivers travel at or below the 85<sup>th</sup> to 90<sup>th</sup> percentile speed and this leads to recommendations that speed limits should normally be set out at or around the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed.
21. Speed limits set unrealistically low and without self-enforcing traffic calming features will lead to an erosion of respect for the speed limit and can lead to driver frustration, lack of compliance and a worsening safety record.
22. The ACPO guidelines for the speed limit enforcement intervention level for a speed limit of:
  - 30 mph is 35 mph (i.e. 30 mph + 10% + 2 mph)
  - 40 mph is 46 mph (i.e. 40 mph + 10% + 2 mph)
23. The recorded northbound 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds on the B4355 (on the northern end) are within the Association of Chief Police Officer's (ACPO) guidelines for the speed enforcement intervention level of 46 mph for a speed limit of 40 mph while the recorded southbound 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed at this location are above this level. This could be due to limited developed frontage along this section and the topography of the road which is characterised by a noticeable downhill gradient (southbound).
24. The recorded 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds show that the drivers (more or less) travel at a constant speed through Titley in all probability due to their perception that the posted 40 mph speed limit is appropriate. A reduction in speed limit could be perceived by drivers to be unreasonably low resulting in a lack of respect for a 30 mph speed limit with drivers then travelling at inappropriate speeds through Titley (especially along the straight section of the B4355 between School Lane and Green Lane) which is likely to increase the risks of collisions.

25. The speed limits should be evidence-led and self-explaining and seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel. The recorded 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds are a very good measure of the people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel and, in this situation, (as discussed above), the responsible drivers consider the posted 40 mph speed limit to be an appropriate for the B4355.
26. Roadside development along the B4355 within the study area is widespread and not in clusters like a typical linear village. Between School Lane and Green Lane, the B4355 is a straight road (approximately seven metres wide) and provides access to four houses; all located on the east side of the road. While travelling along this section, the roadside environment does not give an impression of a typical village.
27. The church and most of the houses to the north of the School Lane are set back from the highway and hence do have the *imposing* effect that roadside fronting developments have on the vehicle speeds. This is evident by the recorded 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds at this location. Therefore, although the government's policy is that a 30 mph speed limit should be a norm through villages, it is considered that the roadside environment along the B4355 in Titley does not lend itself to the recommendation within the government's policy.
28. As such, the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds and the fact that there have been no collisions recorded in the past five-year period does not lead to questions regarding the appropriateness of the current 40 mph speed limit on the B4355.
29. The northern 40/NSL speed terminals are currently obscured by tree canopy. It is therefore recommended to replace the existing 40 mph speed terminals with yellow backed signs to enhance visibility.

U91600 Green Lane, U91601 School Lane and U91602 Eywood Lane

30. The recorded 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds on the U91601 School Lane are already below 30 mph speed limit. This shows that the drivers take into account the road conditions and make a decision on their vehicle speeds accordingly. Therefore, reducing the speed limit to 30 mph is not likely to yield any benefits with regard to reducing vehicle speeds.
31. It is considered that by reducing the speed limit on the U91601 School Lane to 30 mph this could create a situation whereby the drivers perceive the 30 mph speed limit as a safe speed to drive regardless of the road conditions and would therefore see 30 mph as a target speed. This could result in a worsening the safety record for the road. It is therefore not recommended to reduce the speed limit on the U91601 School Lane from its current National Speed Limit to 30 mph.
32. Given the road layout of the other roads within the study area i.e. U91600 Green Lane and the U91602 Eywood Lane are very similar to the U91601 School Lane i.e. single track roads, the speeds on these roads are also likely to be similar to School Lane. Hence, the speed limit reduction on these roads from their current posted National Speed Limit to 30 mph is not recommended on the same grounds as the U91601 School Lane.
33. In August 2018 a Briefing Note setting out a recommendation to make no changes to the existing speed limits was circulated to the Police, the Local Member and the Parish Council. Full responses are set out in Appendices F and G.

34. The responses to the Briefing Note prompted a meeting to take place in October 2018 in Titley Village Hall with the Police, the Local Member, Balfour Beatty and the Parish Council attending. In summary the case was presented for leaving the speed limits at their existing level. It was agreed to undertake a Tapley Meter run around the bends in the vicinity of the Stagg Inn with a view to establishing if it would be appropriate to deploy “max speed” plates to accompany the bend warning signage. It was also agreed that the northern 40 mph terminals and possibly the southern 40 mph terminals may benefit from being on yellow backing boards.
35. The Tapley Meter run established that a “MAX 25” warning plate would be appropriate and the recommendation is to provide new enhanced bend warning signs either side of the bend in question. It is also recommended to provide new enhanced 40 mph terminal signs by the provision of 40 mph signs on yellow backing boards.
36. Responses to the discussions and recommendations from the meeting are contained in Appendix H and in summary records: a reluctant recognition of the recommendation to leave the existing speed limits at their current level and agreement to the recommendation for the enhanced bend warning and 40 mph terminals to be implemented.
37. This report seeks authorisation to expend money from the TRO budget to implement the measures outlined in points 35 and 36 which is estimated to be in the region of £2000.

## **Community Impact**

38. The recommendations to leave the speed limits on the B4355, U91600 Green Lane, U91601 School Lane and U91602 Eywood Lane in Titley at their current levels will maintain a positive impact on road safety and the environment for all roads.

## **Equality Duty**

39. The recommendation to leave the speeds limit at their existing levels on the B4355, U91600 Green Lane, U91601 School Lane and U91602 Eywood Lane in Titley is considered to have equal impact on the majority of the community.
40. See Appendix D of this report for Equality Impacts and Needs Assessment (EINA).

## **Financial Implications**

41. There are no financial implications in relation to the implementation of the TRO as the recommendation is to not change speed limits. Any costs incurred as a result of the investigation and making the recommendation have been identified from the existing budgets. Authorisation is requested to expend money from the TRO budget to implement the measures outlined in points 35 and 36 which is estimated to be in the region of £2000.

## **Legal Implications**

42. There are no legal implications as the recommendation to make no changes to the existing speed limits does not require a speed limit order or any statutory consultation.
43. The Council has discretion to amend its original recommendation(s) if considered

desirable, whether or not in the light of any objections or comments received, as a result of such statutory consultation. If any objections received are accepted, in part or whole, and/or a decision is made to modify the original proposals, if such a modification is considered to be substantial, then steps must be taken for those affected by the proposed modifications to be further consulted

## **Risk Management**

44. The Local Transport Plan sets out the objective to reduce the number and severity of casualties on the highway network in Herefordshire and provide a highway network that is safe and efficient taking into account national guidelines. A Key Performance Indicator is contained in this Local Transport Plan and details a locally set target for a reduction in people who are killed or seriously injured on the highway network.
45. It is important for safety and their effectiveness that speed limits are set at an appropriate level having regard to the type of factors considered in this report. Setting speed limits inappropriately low can result in a worsening safety record by way of increased instances of overtaking, tailgating, driver frustration etc. and can increase the risk of collisions occurring.
46. The adoption of the recommendations in this report would contribute to these objectives in the Local Transport Plan.

## **Consultees**

47. In August 2018 a Briefing Note was circulated to the Local Member, Parish Council and the Police asking for comments on the recommendation not to reduce the existing speed limits. A copy of this Briefing Note is provided in Appendix E.
48. The Police have indicated their support for the recommendations stated in the Briefing Note. The response from the Police is provided in Appendix F.
49. The Local Members and Parish Council response is provided in Appendix G. This suggested a meeting should be held to discuss the survey results.
50. In October 2018 a meeting took place with Balfour Beatty, the Police, the Parish Council and Local Member in attendance. Comments regarding matters discussed are contained in Appendix H and in summary record a reluctant acceptance of the recommendation to leave the speed limits at their current levels and an agreement to proposals to enhance the bend warning signage and speed limit terminal signs.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A – Extent of Review

Appendix B – Current signage plan

Appendix C – Speed survey locations

Appendix D – EINA

Appendix E – Briefing Note

Appendix F – Response from Police

Appendix G – Response from Local Member and Parish Council

Appendix H – Further responses following October 2018 meeting.

## **Background Papers**

- None identified