

Decision title:	St Weonards Village: A466 and U71406 30mph extension
Date of decision:	26 July 2023
Decision maker:	Service Director Environment and Highways
Authority for delegated decision:	<p>Economy and Environment Scheme – Highways and Transport 75. To act on behalf of the council in respect of the legislation specified in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The authorisation limit is within the financial procedure rules and is sufficient for the decision and that the officer has authority under the contract procedure rules.</p> <p>Authorisation limit is within the financial procedure rules and is sufficient for the decision and that the officer has authority under the contract procedure rules.</p>
Ward:	Birch
Consultation:	<p>A Formal (Statutory) Consultation process was undertaken from 26th January 2022 to 17th February 2022, whereby an initial consultation letter and proposal plan was sent to all Statutory Consultees via email. During this process, no objections were raised in relation to the recommendations as part of this TRO. A summary of the responses received during the Formal (Statutory) Consultation process is included as Appendix D.</p> <p>The Notice of Proposal stage allowing the general public and Statutory Consultees to issue comments/concerns was undertaken from 16th June 2022 to 8th July 2022. During this process no objections were raised from the Statutory Consultees nor from members of the public. A summary of the responses received during the Notice of Proposal stage is included as Appendix E. The responses from Statutory Consultees are also summarised below.</p> <p>Ward Councillor – Offered no objections to the scheme.</p> <p>Parish Council – Fully supports the proposals.</p> <p>Traffic Management Advisor (TMA), West Mercia Police – Offered no objections to the proposals.</p> <p>Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service – Issued no response to the consultation.</p> <p>Road Haulage Association – Issued no response to the consultation.</p> <p>Freight Transport Association – Issued no response to the consultation.</p> <p>West Midlands Ambulance Service – Issued no response to the consultation.</p>
Decision made:	St Weonards: extend existing 30mph speed limit on the A466 and u71406.
Reasons for decision:	<p>The scheme originated to compliment a new residential development to the west of the A466 and north of U71406 just south of St Weonards village and is being funded by the developer via a Section 278 agreement. There is a requirement to relocate the existing 30mph speed limit terminals further south to encompass the southern extent of the new development which is currently outside the 30mph speed limit on the A466 and U71406.</p> <p>An on-site assessment was undertaken in November 2021. During the assessment, officers considered the extension with particular consideration for drivers accessing and egressing the new development</p>

access. It was noted that the speed limit extension would need to be lengthy enough to allow ample time for vehicles travelling northbound to reduce their speed before reaching the new development access road. The surrounding environment and road geometry were also considered along with where it was practicable to site new terminal signage and road markings.

Officers identified a suitable location (as shown in Appendix A) at which the 30mph speed limit could be extended to, given the good verge width available to house terminal signage and forward visibility for approaching vehicles. It was also noted that at the proposed entry to the 30mph speed limit, drivers would be able to see the properties on the western side of the road which would give the impression of entering a more built-up environment and therefore further encourage a reduction in speed.

Department for Transport's (DfT) 'Setting Local Speed Limits' document lists key factors for consideration during site assessments regarding local speed limits. One of these is the collision history. Analysis of collision data for the latest 5-year period from 2017-2021 (inclusive) showed no personal injury collisions having taken place within the investigation area.

Another key factor in the document for consideration is 'current traffic speeds'. Therefore, as part of the planning assessment phase, one Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) Survey was undertaken on the A466 in order to ascertain the current vehicle speeds close to the point at which the proposed pedestrian access to the new development will be located. The speed survey data, existing signage and restrictions are included as Appendix C. Speed data comprising 85th percentile vehicle speeds (mph) are summarised in the table below.

	Northbound	Southbound
ATC 1	53.5	55.0

The vehicle speeds collected are above the maximum guideline intervention level for a 30mph speed limit of 35mph, as set by Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) guidance. However, they do suggest that vehicles travelling northbound are slowing down as they travel from the existing national speed limit towards the existing 30mph speed limit. Additionally, the location of the survey is within the current national speed limit and is a reasonable distance from the existing 30mph speed limit, so it is unsurprising that existing vehicle speeds are high. Furthermore, the roadside environment in this area will be changing considerably following the completion of the residential development. It is therefore likely that with high profile village nameplate signage, road roundels and repeater signage, and the new development which will be visible from the road changing the existing environment, vehicles would likely reduce their speed to a level within or close to this guidance. The southbound speed is typical of vehicles which are currently accelerating out of the existing 30mph speed limit into the national speed limit.

Following the completion of the initial assessment, a Formal (Statutory) Consultation process was undertaken from 26th January 2022 to 17th February 2022, whereby a consultation letter and proposal plan were sent to all Statutory Consultees via email. During this process, no objections were raised in relation to the recommendations as part of this TRO. A summary of the responses received during the Formal (Statutory) Consultation process is included as Appendix D.

During this consultation process, the Traffic Management Advisor for West Mercia Police stated an understanding of the reasoning behind the extension and therefore offered no objections but did offer concerns regarding the vehicle speeds being at a high level currently. There was an acknowledgement that the roadside environment would change and that this may affect driver behaviour. The importance of implementing

measures which would contribute to reduction in vehicle speeds was stressed.

As stressed by the Traffic Management Advisor, the scheme design includes high profile yellow-backed terminal signage for the proposed 30mph speed limit as well as a red backed road roundel and repeater signage. Combined with the change in roadside environment as a result of the development works, this should have a notable impact on vehicle speeds.

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During this consultation the Parish Council confirmed their full support. The Ward Councillor offered no objections but stated a hope that this TRO process could be used to investigate ways in which a 20mph speed limit could be initiated through the village and to improve road safety for all road users.

In response to the Ward Councillors comments regarding a 20mph speed limit, this TRO is a requirement as a result of the residential development being constructed to the west of the A466 and is part of a Section 278 agreement. This TRO is specifically for an extension to the existing 30mph speed limit already within the village. DfT 'Setting Local Speed Limits' guidance for a 20mph speed limit states "It may also be appropriate to consider 20 mph limits or zones in built-up village streets which are primarily residential in nature, or where pedestrian and cyclist movements are high. Such limits should not, however, be considered on roads with a strategic function or where the movement of motor vehicles is the primary function". Therefore, a 20mph speed limit would not meet this guidance at St Weonards, as the roads' primary function (particularly the A466) is for the movement of motor vehicles. A 20mph speed limit is not appropriate at St Weonards and if it is to be investigated, this should be as part of a separate TRO request.

According to the Road Traffic Regulation Act (RTRA) 1984, it is the duty of a highway authority to 'manage their road network' and 'to improve road safety'. Section 122 of the RTRA 1984 states that local authorities must, so far as is practicable, exercise their functions under the RTRA so as to 'secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic'.

Department for Transport's (Dft) 'Setting Local Speed Limits' guidance states that 'fear of traffic can affect people's quality of life in villages, and it is self-evident that villages should have comparable speed limits to similar roads in urban areas. It is therefore government policy that a 30mph speed limit should be the norm through villages.' DfT's 'Village Speed Limits' (2004) supplement states that in order to qualify as a 'village' there should be 20 or more houses, over a distance of at least 600m with a housing density of 3 houses per 100m. The proposals accord with this guidance, and it is prudent that the entirety of St Weonards (to include the new development) be covered by a 30mph speed limit.

In conclusion, the proposed 30mph speed limit aligns with guidance set out by Department for Transport's 'Village Speed Limits' (2004) supplement and the duties set out in Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The proposed speed limit will act to improve road safety and amenity for passing vehicles and local residents of the new development to the west of the A466. Despite vehicle speeds being above the guideline maximum intervention level set in the ACPO guidance for a 30mph speed limit, the speed readings were undertaken at a location which is currently under national speed limit and where the roadside environment is currently rural.

	<p>Additionally, the 30mph speed limit will be accompanied by high profile yellow backed signage, repeater signage and road roundels. No objection has been raised by West Mercia Police nor the Ward Councillor. Finally, the proposals are fully supported by the Parish Council and local residents.</p> <p>It is, therefore, advised to progress with the recommendations outlined in this report for the reasons set out above.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  Appendix B.pdf </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Appendix A.pdf </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Appendix F.pdf </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Appendix E.pdf </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  Appendix D.pdf </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Appendix C.pdf </div> </div>
<p>Equality Considerations</p>	<p>Herefordshire Council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public, and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire’s outstanding natural environment.</p> <p>The development of this project has sought to minimise any adverse environmental impact and will actively seek opportunities to improve and enhance environmental performance.</p> <p>The implementation of the proposals should result in improved road safety and amenity and provide an environment where people feel it is safer to walk, cycle or ride throughout the area.</p>
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>Community impact</p> <p>The recommendations outlined above will have a positive impact on the local community. The implementation of the proposed extension to the existing 30mph speed limit will seek to improve road safety and amenity. The proposals are therefore in alignment with Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.</p> <p>Environmental Impact</p> <p>Herefordshire Council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public, and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire’s outstanding natural environment.</p> <p>The development of this project has sought to minimise any adverse environmental impact and will actively seek opportunities to improve and enhance environmental performance.</p> <p>The implementation of the proposals should result in improved road safety and amenity and provide an environment where people feel it is safer to walk, cycle or ride throughout the area.</p> <p>Resource implications</p> <p>The cost of the implementation of the proposals is approximately £15,000. This includes costs for statutory consultation, preparing and making the TRO, signage, road markings and advertising. This cost is to be covered by the developer as part of a Section 278 agreement with Herefordshire Council.</p> <p>Legal implications</p>

The introduction of a new TRO under Section 84 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 will be required.

Part 2 of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 ("the 1996 Regulations") lays out the procedure prior to making an order. Regulations 6 and 7 require the Council as Highway Authority to undertake a formal consultation on the TRO and publish the proposals. Regulation 8 allows for any person or persons to make objections and requires that the Council, as Highway Authority, consider any objections received after the formal statutory consultation process, (which includes advertising in a local newspaper). A subsequent report will include any such objections or comments, for consideration.

The Council has discretion to amend its original proposals 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 in accordance with Regulation 14 of the 1996 Regulations. Following consideration of the consultation responses the Council has decided not to modify the proposals.

The Council has received no Objections. Before the Order can be made it will need to be publicised in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 7 of the 1996 Regulations. This includes publication of a notice of the proposals in a newspaper circulating in the locality of the area where the road which is the subject of the Order is located. This must be done within two years of the date the order is first publicised in a newspaper circulating in the locality of the area where the land to which the Order relates is located. Within 14 days of the order being made it is necessary in accordance with Regulation 17 of the 1996 Regulations to publish a notice of making in a newspaper circulating in the area in which any road or place to which the Order relates is situated.

Once an Order is made by the Council it will need to be publicised in accordance with the requirements of Part 3 of the 1996 Regulations. The Order cannot come into force before the order has been publicised in accordance with these requirements. The time period for challenge is three months from the date of the making of the Order.

Risk management

The Local Transport Plan sets out to reduce the number and severity of casualties on the highway network in Herefordshire and provide a highway network that is safe and efficient. A Key Performance Indicator is contained in this Local Transport Plan and details a locally set target for a reduction in fatal or serious injuries on the highway network. The adoption of the recommendations in this report would contribute to these objectives in the Local Transport Plan.

It is important for safety, and their effectiveness that speed limits are imposed appropriately having regard to the type of factors considered in this report. This is the case at St Weonards.

There is a risk that the proposals may not achieve routine compliance. However, given that the restrictions will be accompanied by high profile terminal signage, repeater signage and road markings and that the development will be visible from the road thereby changing the existing roadside environment, it should be clear to drivers that they are entering a more built-up environment. The risk of non-compliance is therefore considered negligible.

<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>Not to make any changes to the current speed limit arrangement – This is not recommended as it would fail to achieve the primary purpose of the proposal – to include the new residential development to the west of the A466 and north of U71406 just south of St Weonards within the 30mph speed limit. The southern extent of the development and pedestrian access is outside of the existing 30mph speed limit and within the existing national speed limit. It is therefore prudent that the existing national speed limit be reduced to a 30mph speed limit to accommodate this new development. The proposals seek to improve road safety and amenity for vehicles and pedestrians in alignment with Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Furthermore, not to implement the extension of the 30mph speed limit would be in contravention to the desires of the Parish Council, and local residents. This extension is a requirement as part of a Section 278 agreement with the developer.</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>None</p>

Signed..... Date:

Please ensure that signatures are redacted before publishing.