

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Decision to not reduce the existing 30mph Speed Limit to 20mph at Cleeve Orchard, Hereford.
Date of decision:	22 nd November 2023
Decision maker:	Service Director Environment and Highways
Authority for delegated decision:	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.
Ward:	Holmer
Consultation:	A site assessment was undertaken in November 2022 and further investigations carried out following this which are detailed in the Key Considerations section of this report. There is no requirement to carry out any consultations as a TRO is not being progressed.
Decision made:	Following a site audit and assessment, a TRO is not considered an appropriate course of action and it is felt that the current speed limit is appropriate for the section of road under investigation.
Reasons for decision:	<p>The scheme originated in response to a signed petition of Cleeve Orchard residents requesting that a 20mph speed limit be introduced. There was a requirement to investigate the suitability of the existing 30mph speed limit and whether it was feasible to introduce a lower speed limit.</p> <p>An on-site assessment was undertaken in November 2022. During the assessment, officers considered the appropriateness of a reduced speed limit considering the surrounding environment and road geometry.</p> <p>Department for Transport's (DfT) 'Setting Local Speed Limits' document states that when considering reducing any given speed limit, the surrounding roadside environment is of paramount importance stressing that a principle aim in determining suitable speed limits should be to provide a consistent message between the speed limit and what the road looks like/the surrounding environment. Additionally, the national speed limit on street lit roads (such as Cleeve Orchard) is 30 mph. However, the document also states Traffic authorities can, over time, introduce 20mph speed limits or zones on major streets where there are – or could be - significant numbers of journeys on foot where pedal cycle movements are an important consideration, and this outweighs the disadvantage of longer journey times for motorised traffic.</p> <p>When assessing the road characteristics and its surrounding environment it was clear that Cleeve Orchard was suited to the current 30mph speed limit. The road is street lit and therefore by virtue of the street lighting is 30mph. There are wide footways on both sides of the carriageway and pedestrian movements observed during the assessment were limited. The Automatic Traffic Count data shows limited traffic movements within Cleeve Orchard, with an average of 1153 vehicle movements a day. Therefore, the road is not considered a major street. It is also important that speed limits provide a consistent message between the speed limit and what the road looks like/the surrounding environment. The road suits the current speed limit arrangement and is consistent with similar roads across the county's road network.</p> <p>Another key factor in the 'Setting Local Speed Limits' document for consideration is 'current traffic speeds'. Vehicle speeds were noted to be fairly low during the site visit, however, one Automatic Traffic Count (ATC)</p>



Survey was undertaken, as speeds were reported to be higher from residents. Speed data comprising mean vehicle speeds (and 85th percentile) (mph) are summarised in the table below and shown in Appendix B.

	Northbound	Southbound
ATC 1	17.7 (23.5)	16.9 (23.4)

The data shows existing vehicle speeds are within Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) guideline intervention level for a 20mph speed limit of 24mph. They also demonstrate that vehicle speeds are significantly below the ACPO guideline intervention level for a 30mph speed limit of 35mph. Therefore, this shows that drivers in general are driving to the conditions of the road. Additionally, there is the possibility that introducing a signed 20mph speed limit could, in fact, encourage drivers to increase their speed and increase these vehicle speeds.

Another key consideration set in the DfT 'Setting Local Speed Limits' document is the collision history of the area. Collision records from Herefordshire Council's database show no collisions have occurred in the period from January 2017 to December 2022.

Considering regulations, 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'.

In conclusion, it is evident from an on-site assessment, consideration of national guidance, collision history & existing vehicle speeds that the existing 30mph speed limit should not be reduced to 20mph at Cleeve Orchard, Hereford. Therefore, no Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) should be progressed.

What is recommended, however, is that a letter explaining the reasons set out in this report is sent to the residents of Cleeve Orchard, in order to respond to their petition concerns.

The above recommendation is in alignment with guidance set out by Department for Transport and would not be of detriment to the council's duties under section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.



Appendix A.pdf



Appendix B.pdf



Appendix C.pdf

Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:

Community impact

The recommendation not to make any change to the existing 30mph speed limit will have no impact on the local community.

Environmental Impact

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.

The adoption of these recommendations will not have a negative impact on the environment.

Equality duty

The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good

	<p>relations and demonstrate that we are paying ‘due regard’ in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.</p> <p>The recommendations set out in this report are considered to be low impact with regards to equality thus paying regard to the council’s duty according to the Equality Act 2010 as set out below.</p> <p>Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the ‘general duty’ on public authorities is set out as follows: A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; • advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; • foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. <p>Any impact as a result of the scheme will be equal to all parties.</p> <p>See Appendix C of this report for Equality Impacts and Needs Assessment (EINA).</p> <p>Resource implications The cost of this TRO scheme to date is £3,719. This cost has been identified from this year’s existing budgets in the current Annual Plan.</p> <p>Legal implications The introduction of a new TRO is not recommended as part of these proposals.</p> <p>There are no further legal requirements in not making the TRO, even if objections are made. It is at the discretion of the Council as the Highway Authority whether to make a TRO dependent on the justification for doing so.</p> <p>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 have no impact to the objectives in the Local Transport Plan.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>To implement a reduction in the current 30mph speed limit to a 20mph speed limit at Cleeve Orchard – This is not recommended for a number of reasons outlined in detail in the Key Considerations section of this report. In brief, the surveyed vehicle speeds at Cleeve Orchard are already very low and as such a signed 20mph speed limit would be unlikely to further lower vehicle speeds. Additionally, the roadside environment is suitable for a 30mph speed limit and consistent with similar roads in the county.</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>None</p>

Signed..... Date: