

Record of operational decision

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| Decision title: | Decision to not reduce existing 40mph Speed Limit to 30mph on A4103 and A4110, Huntington, Herefordshire, at the Three Elms Development. |
| 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, Queenswood & Bobblestock |
| Consultation: | A site assessment was undertaken in July 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. The Traffic Management Advisor for West Mercia Police has been informally consulted and agrees with the decision that the speed limit at this location should remain as 40mph and that the existing signage and road markings should be improved to ensure future compliance of the 40mph limit |
| 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: | The scheme originated to compliment a new residential development to the east of the A4110, north of its junction with A4013 at Huntington, Hereford. It is being funded by the developer via a Section 278 agreement. There was a requirement to investigate the suitability of the existing 40mph speed limit on the A4103 as well as the A4110 (where the development will be) in order to avoid too many changes to the speed limit in the area. As part of the planning assessment process for the new development, it was noted that vehicle speeds would need to be at 40mph when passing the development considering the visibility splay from the new development access. An on-site assessment was undertaken in July 2022. During the assessment, officers considered the appropriateness of a reduced speed limit considering drivers accessing and egressing the new development access. The surrounding environment and road geometry were also considered on both the A4103 and A4110. Department for Transport's (DfT) 'Setting Local Speed Limits' document starts 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, with regards to a 40mph speed limit in a more urban area, this is appropriate in high quality suburban roads or in the outskirts of urban areas and where the movement of motor vehicles is the primary function. When assessing the road characteristics and its surrounding environment it was clear that on the A4103 the road was suited to the current 40mph speed limit. West of its junction with A4110 although there is development present, it is set well back from the road and east of its junction with A4110 there is no development visible from the roadside as it is set back even |

further. On A4110, there is housing set well back from the road on its eastern side and rural farmland on its western side. The A4110, like the A4103 is a major A class road which has the primary function of carrying traffic – notably including HGVs. Both roads seemed to suit the current speed limit arrangement.

Another key factor in the ‘Setting Local Speed Limits’ document for consideration is ‘current traffic speeds’. On A4103, speeds were noted to be fairly low during the site visit, likely due to the close proximity of the crossroads junction with A4110. On the A4110 however, two Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) Surveys were undertaken as speeds were known to be and were witnessed during the site assessment to be generally higher. Speed data comprising 85th percentile vehicle speeds (mph) are summarised in the table below and shown in Appendix B.

| | Northbound | Southbound |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| ATC 1 (Northernmost) | 48.4 | 47.7 |
| ATC 2 (Southernmost) | 44.1 | 40.6 |

The data shows speeds well in excess of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) guideline intervention level for a 30mph speed limit of 35mph. They also demonstrate that vehicle speeds are all close to or within the ACPO guideline intervention level for a 40mph speed limit of 46mph. The southernmost survey location sits just north of the new development access location and shows southbound speeds at the 40mph requirement as part of the planning assessment phase considering the visibility splays of the new development.

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 2 collisions have occurred in the period from January 2017 to August 2022. Both collisions were classed as serious, and their locations are included in Appendix C.

One collision occurred outside the investigation area in January 2018 and was as a result of a pedestrian jumping into the road late at night and being struck by a vehicle. The other occurred in August 2020 and involved a cyclist mounting the pavement to pass around a stationary vehicle then re-entering the road at the vehicles blind spot and being struck when the vehicle moved off. Neither collision was related to vehicle speeds.

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 85th percentile vehicle speeds that the existing 40mph speed limit should not be reduced to 30mph on A4103 and A4110 at Huntington, Hereford. No Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) should therefore be progressed.

What is recommended, however, is that the existing 40mph speed limit signage and terminals on A4110 be enhanced, with new entry terminal signage, repeater signs and road markings to be considered. This will help to ensure that vehicle speeds are at the required 40mph in the vicinity of the development access road as per the planning assessment requirements.

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



D – EINA.pdf



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

Community impact

The recommendation not to make any change to the existing 40mph 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 development of this project has sought to minimise any adverse environmental impact and will actively seek opportunities to improve and enhance environmental performance.

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 relations and demonstrate that we are paying ‘due regard’ in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.

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.

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 -

- 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.

Any impact as a result of the scheme will be equal to all parties.

See Appendix D of this report for Equality Impacts and Needs Assessment (EINA).

Resource implications

The cost of this TRO scheme to date is £2,819.00. This cost is to be covered by the developer as part of a Section 278 agreement with Herefordshire Council.

Legal implications

The introduction of a new TRO is not recommended as part of these proposals.

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

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| | <p>Authority whether to make a TRO dependent on the justification for doing so.</p> <p>Risk management</p> <p>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 40mph speed limit to a 30mph speed limit on both A4110 and A4103 – 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 on A4110 are well above the guideline enforcement level of 35mph for a 30mph speed limit as set out by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) guidance document. Additionally, the roadside environment on both roads is not befitting of a 30mph speed limit with all properties being set well back from the road and not affronting it. The A4110 in particular is largely rural in character, particularly on its western side. Further, both the A4103 and A4110 are A class roads with a primary function of carrying through traffic. On A4110, in order to bring existing vehicle speeds within a compliant level for a 30mph speed limit vertical calming measures would be required which are not suitable on a major A road such as the A4110.</p> <p>The purpose of this scheme assessment was to compliment a new development on the eastern side of the A4110. However, following further investigations the development access, as well as its visibility splays, have been designed with a 40mph speed limit in place on the A4110 passing the new development access. Therefore, it is recommended that the existing 40mph speed limit features (markings and signage) are enhanced in order to improve compliance with the existing 40mph speed limit. A 30mph speed limit is not considered feasible. The Traffic Management Advisor for West Mercia Police has been informally consulted and agrees with this assessment.</p> |
| <p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p> | <p>None</p> |

Signed..... Date: