

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Decision to maintain the current speed limit on the B4243 between Potson Mill and C1222 junction and the C1206 through Turnastone in Herefordshire
Date of decision:	22 nd January 2025
Decision maker:	Head of Highways and Traffic
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:	Golden Valley South
Consultation:	A formal investigation process was undertaken from 29 th April 2024 to 19 th September 2024, whereby the feasibility for reducing the speed limit from the current National speed limit following a request received from the Parish Council. ATC surveys were commissioned in July 2024 to obtain existing vehicle speeds on the B4348 and C1206 which provides valuable data to assist the decision making for setting appropriate speed limits.
Decision made:	Following the investigation into a speed limit reduction, it is recommended that the current speed limit is not reduced, for the reasons as set out below. It is recommended that enhanced engineering measures are provided in lieu of Traffic Order.
Reasons for decision:	<p>After a thorough review in accordance with the Department for Transport (DfT) Circular 01/13 on setting local speed limits, the decision has been made not to reduce the speed limit from the national speed limit along the B4348 from Potson Mill to the C1222 junction. This decision is based on several key considerations:</p> <p>The overall environment along the B4348 is characterised by relatively sparse development, with isolated hazards such as junctions appropriately managed through signage and road markings in line with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD). The road's geometry and surrounding environment do not meet the criteria for a 40 mph limit, as indicated by DfT Circular 01/13, which requires speed limits to reflect the character of the road and surrounding conditions. It's a common and understandable thought that lowering a speed limit can only be a move for the better but speed limits that are set at inappropriate levels and / or over inappropriate lengths do have drawbacks such as increased incidents of overtaking, tailgating etc.</p> <p>When conducting a speed limit review, one of the primary criteria is the evaluation of recorded collision history for the section of highway under consideration. This analysis is crucial as collision data often reveals the locations and causes of accidents, enabling the determination of whether these incidents can be mitigated through the implementation of speed limits and/or engineering interventions. This review is limited to the use of evidence from the Herefordshire Council collision database to ensure consistency in assessments conducted across the County.</p> <p>A review of the collision history for this stretch of road shows three recorded collisions in the past five years which resulted in personal injury. While I</p>

understand the concern, the causative factors behind these collisions are not attributed to excessive vehicle speeds. Furthermore, these incidents are unlikely to have been prevented by the implementation of a lower speed limit suggesting that the existing national speed limit does not present a significant safety concern requiring intervention. This data indicates that the current speed limit and associated traffic management measures are sufficient for maintaining road safety.






	North / East bound	South / West bound
ATC 1 – B4342	53.8	57.3
ATC 2 – B4342	45.2	50.4
ATC 3 – B4342	45.2	48.4
ATC 4 – B4342	46.7	47.5
ATC 5 – C1206	28.5	31.1
ATC 6 – C1206	35.0	36.2
ATC 7 – C1206	32.2	30.8

A 50 mph limit was also evaluated for this section of the B4348; however, the recorded 85th percentile speeds range from approximately 45 to 48 mph, indicating that drivers are already traveling at speeds they deem safe within the national speed limit. Introducing a 50 mph limit could inadvertently suggest it is safe to travel faster than what motorists currently assessing without a speed restriction, potentially increasing the risk of accidents. As a result, a 50 mph limit has been ruled out to avoid negatively impacting the current safety record. Speed limits tend not to influence the behaviour of those that wilfully drive at inappropriate speeds, often the effects of putting a speed limit in place can be disappointing insofar as the actions of the irresponsible motorists are often still evident.

The C1206 was also considered for a reduction to a 30 mph limit. While this location meets the criteria for a 'village environment' as defined by DfT Circular 01/13 on two stretches throughout the extent, and existing speed data suggests good compliance with a 30 mph limit due to the road's geometry and environment, the collision history does not indicate a need for intervention. The recorded speed data from July 2024 further suggests that implementing a 30 mph restriction would not significantly alter motorist behaviour. Given the limited budgets and resources available, Herefordshire Council must prioritise interventions where significant safety improvements can be achieved. The evidence does not support a change to the speed limits along these roads, as there is no indication of a substantial safety benefit.

While a speed limit is not currently supported for the C1206 through Turnastone, several engineering measures can be implemented to address concerns regarding specific features, such as the bridge and blind bends. These measures would enhance the safety of these particular hazards and are likely to offer greater benefits than the introduction of a blanket speed limit. Indeed, this approach aligns with the Department for Transport's recommendations for managing isolated hazards. A design of suggested improvements have been provided to the Parish Council for review and installation will take place going forward.

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'

	<p>In conclusion, the decision to maintain the national speed limit along the B4348 from Potson Mill to the C1222 junction and not reduce the speed limit on the C1206 is supported by the road environment, collision history, and speed data. Maintaining the existing speed limits aligns with DfT Circular 01/13 and ensures that resources are focused on locations where they can provide the most significant safety improvements.</p> <p>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.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  Appendix A.pdf </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Appendix B.pdf </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Appendix C.pdf </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  Appendix D.pdf </div> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  Appendix E.pdf </div>
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>Community impact The recommendation not to make any change to the existing speed limit will have no impact on the local community.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The adoption of these recommendations will not have a negative impact on the environment.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The recommendations set out in this report are considered to be low impact with regards to equality. The proposals aim to improve road amenity and safety, thus paying regard to the council's duty according to the Equality Act 2010 as set out below.</p> <p>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"> (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; (c) 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 B of this report for Equality Impacts and Needs Assessment (EINA).</p>

	<p>Resource implications The cost of this TRO scheme to date will be funded from existing budgets.</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 contribute to these objectives in the Local Transport Plan.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>To implement a reduction to the current National speed limit on the B4348 from Potson to the C1222 junction and the C1206 through Turnastone – 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, collision history and roadside environment at these locations indicate that the existing speed limit is appropriate and there is no evidence to suggest a safety improvement will be gained by reducing the speed limit.</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>None</p>

Signed..... Date: