

Request for extension of 30mph speed limit on Shaldon Road, Newton Abbot

Report of the Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure, Development and Waste

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

Recommendation: It is recommended that:

- (a) The County Council's policies on speed limits be noted;
- (b) The speed limits remain as currently posted.

1. Background/Introduction

Councillor Gordon Hook has asked this Committee to consider extending the 30mph speed limit on Shaldon Road from its current extent, just west of the Milber Service Station Industrial Units, to just past the junction with Haytor Drive. Currently this section is subject to a 40mph speed limit. The speed limits on Shaldon Road are shown in the diagram in Appendix I.

2. Main Text/Proposal

Devon County Council's agreed speed limit policy is based on Department for Transport guidance on setting local speed limits. The speed limit of 40mph in the area under consideration is consistent with the approved speed limit policy. Any departure from this policy would need Cabinet approval.

A 30mph speed limit is appropriate on a section of road in a community where at least 20 properties front a road at a density of at least 3 properties every 100 metres. Gateways to communities are usually the best location for a lower speed limit to start as drivers then associate the lower speed limit with the visible development fronting the road and adjust their speed accordingly. Where the 30mph criteria is not met, higher speed limits such as 40mph and 50mph can be considered on strategic urban roads and more rural roads if there is a significant history of speed related injury collisions.

Introducing speed limits where there is little or no development visible to the driver will usually lead to the speed limit being disregarded, which in turn could place an unrealistic demand for enforcement on the Police. Introduction of inappropriately low speed limits can also introduce a false expectation of low vehicle speeds to pedestrians and other vulnerable road users, who may then take less care when crossing the road.

Analysis of collision data shows that there were 5 collisions between the Haytor Drive junction and Penn Inn Roundabout, two slight injury, two serious injury, and

one fatal injury, in the five years 2015 to 2019. Of these, one slight injury collision occurred at the junction with St Marychurch Road and the remainder were between the end of the existing 30mph speed limit and the junction with Twickenham Road. In none of these accidents was speed given as a factor, and all appear to have occurred in low speed circumstances.

Modifications to speed limits can be considered when changes to the road environment indicate that a different limit is appropriate; this could be as a result of development fronting the road or the introduction of traffic calming. There have been no recent changes to the road layout on this section of Shaldon Road.

Slow road markings, reinforced with strips of coloured surfacing, have been marked on the road at intervals between the start of the 40mph speed limit, just to the east of the Haytor Drive junction, and the junction with St Marychurch Road.

3. Options/Alternatives

Given the absence of speed as a factor in any of the recorded collisions it is considered appropriate, and in line with the County Council's policies, that the speed limit remains at 40mph on this section of road.

4. Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

No consultation has been undertaken. If the speed limit is to be altered a Traffic Regulation Order will be needed, and this would be advertised for public comment.

5. Financial Considerations

The process to extend the Traffic Regulation Order for a speed limit is a formal procedure, which includes advertisement and consultation. If significant objections are received the matter may need to be considered once again by this Committee. The process can cost at least £3,000, which does not include the additional cost of any signing and lighting which may be required. No source of funding has currently been identified to cover these costs.

6. Environmental Impact Considerations

If a lower speed was introduced and was successful in reducing vehicle speeds it may lead to a small reduction in total emissions as vehicles use less fuel at lower speeds.

If a lower speed limit was successful in reducing vehicle speeds it may allow pedestrians to cross the road more easily, but if it isn't it may make the road more dangerous by giving an expectation of lower vehicle speeds.

7. Equality Considerations

There are not considered to be any equality issues in regard to this scheme.

8. Legal Considerations

When making a Traffic Regulation Order it is the County Council responsibility to ensure that all relevant legislation is complied with. This includes Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 that states that it is the duty of a local authority, so far as practicable, secures the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic and provision of parking facilities.

9. Risk Management Considerations

There is a risk that if a 30mph speed limit is introduced, and is not adhered to, there may be a false expectation of lower vehicle speeds for users of this road, including for any pedestrians who may seek to cross the road.

10. Public Health Impact

There are not considered to be any public health impacts in regard to this scheme.

11. Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations

It is considered that the current speed limit regime on Shaldon Hill is correct for this particular environment.

Meg Booth
Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure, Development and Waste

Electoral Divisions: Newton Abbot South and Teignbridge South

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
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None

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