

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; and**
- (b) The speed limits remain as currently posted.**

1. Background/Introduction

The previous County Councillor for Newton Abbot South, Cllr Gordon Hook, 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.

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.

At the meeting of this Committee on 4 March 2021 it was recorded that Members were advised that a detailed accesses map might be the main consideration due to the criteria relating to frontage access in the Local Speed Limit Policy while speed data would give a fuller understanding of the issues, and it was therefore resolved:

“that in order to progress the matter discussions be held as soon as possible between the Chair, local County Councillor and Officers and prior to the written report to the next meeting.”

This meeting took place on the 18 March 2021. A diagram showing the access points is given in Appendix II. In summary the following access points were observed:

- 30 Informal accesses, mostly garden gates, but approximately 10 are unapproved vehicle accesses which do not appear to be regularly used. All of these connect onto the verge or public footway, not directly onto the highway.
- 5 Formal pedestrian access, all of which connect onto the public footway.
- 2 Formal pedestrian routes directly accessing onto the highway. Neither of these are highway paths.
- 4 Road junctions.
- 3 Formal commercial vehicle entrances onto the highway

As there are only three legal accesses onto the highway, and the layout of the residential developments clearly demonstrates that it was not intended that vehicle access should be gained via the back gardens, it is not considered that this section of road would meet the criteria for a 30mph speed limit.

The undertaking of a vehicle speed survey has been delayed because of the current COVID pandemic, and its impact in traffic volumes and speeds. A survey was undertaken between Tuesday 20 April and Monday 26 April 2021. The recording equipment was located approximately 100m east (uphill) of the junction with the Foxhollows junction. The results are given below. This demonstrates that the 85th percentile speed is broadly compliant with the current 40mph speed limit.

Direction of travel	Average daily traffic flow	85th percentile speed (mph)	Mean speed (mph)
Westbound (downhill)	3,153	39.8	34.9
Eastbound (uphill)	3,253	40.9	35.4
Both Directions	6,441	40.3	35.1

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.

3. Options/Alternatives

Given the absence of speed as a factor in any of the recorded collisions, and the broad compliance with the existing speed limit, 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, Teign Estuary

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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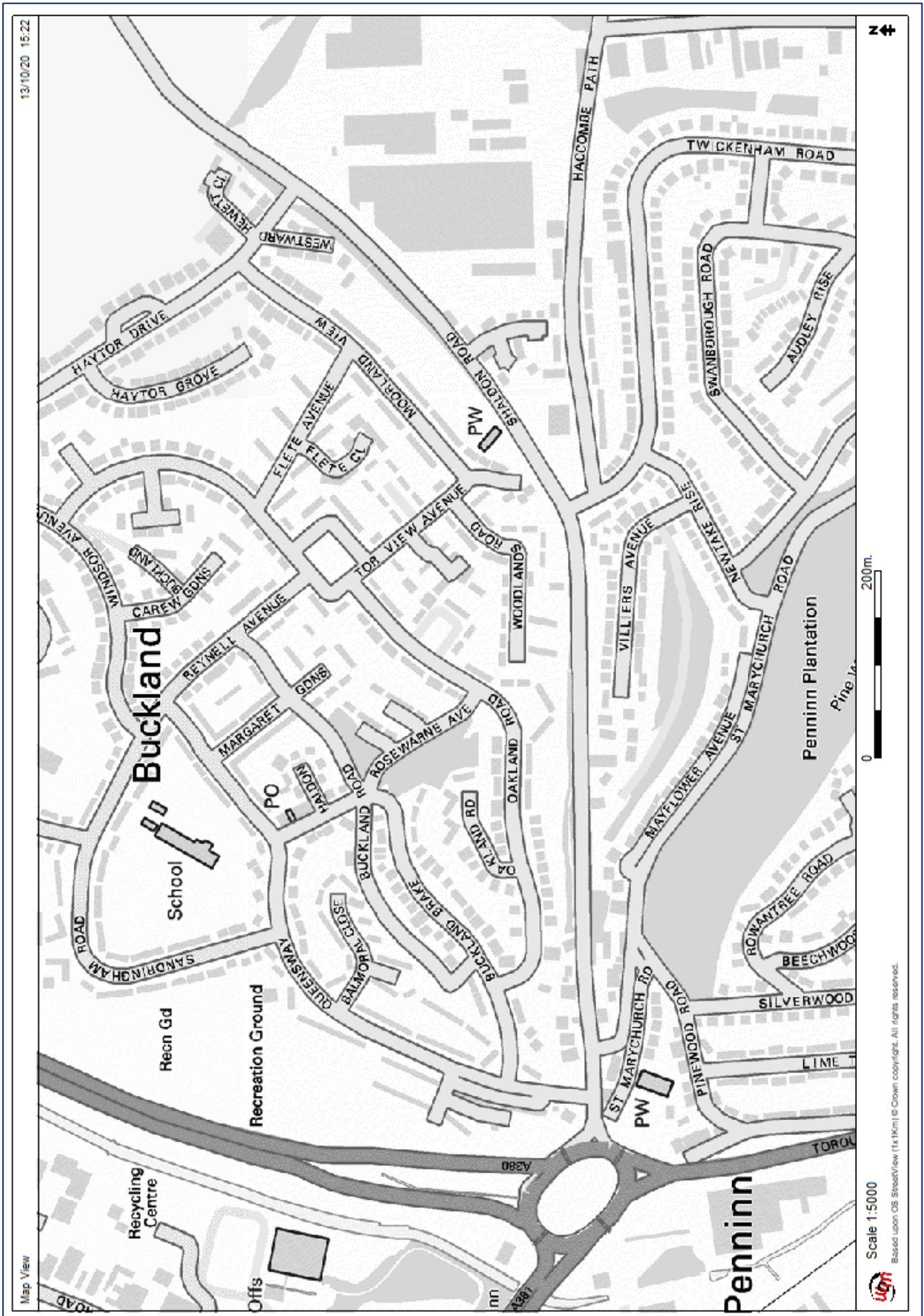
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Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
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Nil

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Existing Speed limits on Shaldon Road



Scale 1:5000

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Shaldon Road Access Points (March 2021)

