

Shaldon Hill, Newton Abbot: Traffic Safety Review, Progress Report

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

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

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Committee be asked to note the measures outlined in this report.

1. Summary

To inform members of the progress made in undertaking a traffic safety review of Shaldon Hill, Newton Abbot.

2. Introduction

An outstanding request from the previous County Council member to reduce the speed limit on Shaldon Hill from 40mph to 30 mph . A virtual site meeting was held on 4 November 2021 and comprised of local Member, Councillor Bradford, neighbouring Member, Councillor Dewhirst, along with HATOC Chair, Councillor Wrigley, and the Cabinet Member for Highway Management, Councillor Hughes. Elected Members were joined by representatives of the Traffic Management Team, Neighbourhood Highways Team, Road Safety Team, Head of Service and Police representative. It was established that the traffic speed and Personal Injury Collision (PIC) data demonstrate that the road meets the requirements for a 40mph speed limit and resolved that this should remain.

Members expressed concern about safety around the side road junctions and it was resolved that officers would undertake a traffic safety review to identify any signing/lining improvements that might address these concerns.

The review has been carried out and it has been established that the road alignment and environment create conditions which can make drivers turning out of the side roads nervous. Depending on the weather and time of day, drivers may find themselves looking directly into bright sunlight or dark shadows for a safe gap in traffic to pull out. At some junctions they find their view restricted by the summit of the hill or a bend in the road. This means that on occasions they pull out just as a vehicle emerges into view, which can be unnerving. There is no evidence that any PICs have occurred near the junctions. Drivers travelling along Shaldon Road can see the side road junctions beyond normal stopping distance and can be seen from the side roads before they get too close to safely pull out, but it is appreciated this may not be apparent to drivers pulling out who suddenly see a vehicle coming towards them.

The start of the 40mph speed limit approaching the town is in the most logical place; at the point where the first buildings are situated. The signs are on the summit of a hill and in certain weather conditions they can be hard to see because they are silhouetted by bright sunlight directly behind them. Drivers unfamiliar with the area may not see the signs until they are passing them, meaning they have to reduce speed inside the 40mph limit while travelling downhill.

3. Proposal

It is intended to implement No Waiting at any time around the side road junctions where parked vehicles obstruct the visibility of drivers looking along the main road and make it difficult for large vans to take the appropriate line turning in or out. There are one or two potential locations where this would be appropriate. Approval to advertise the waiting restrictions will be delegated to the Chief Officer in consultation with the Chair and local county councillor in due course.

Coloured/textured surface treatment has been installed around the junctions together with warning markings/lines on the approaches. Turning lanes, ghost islands and central hatching have been installed to make the junctions more conspicuous and to delineate the correct vehicle path. These lines are very worn and it is proposed to renew them along the entire length of the road.

The road is lined with trees for most of its length and these are thick grown, which casts heavy shadows which obscure vision. They also create a strobe effect when driving past in bright conditions. In a few places low branches and other roadside vegetation hinder forward visibility. It is proposed to request to have them cut back or thinned out as appropriate, subject to an assessment of the trees and recommendation by suitably qualified persons.

It is proposed to replace the 40 speed limit signs with a larger size and a larger backing board (subject to adequate clearance) and install additional repeater signs along the road to make the speed limit more noticeable. Roundels at each end of the 40mph speed limit and on the approach to the side road junctions will be installed where appropriate. Consideration will be given to relocating the signs if moving them a very short distance achieves a road safety gain, but not to the extent that would require a change to the speed limit Order.

4. Options/Alternatives

Reducing the speed limit has been thoroughly investigated and rejected as it would contradict national and Devon County Council policy and would create potential safety hazards by imposing a limit unsuited to road and traffic conditions. There are no speed-related PICs on Shaldon Road in the 40 mph section.



5-year PIC Data

There is very limited opportunity to address problems caused by the horizontal and vertical road alignment.

Detailed design of the proposals is being completed. Members are advised that while the design principles have been established, the nature of the hazard requires observations to be taken during different weather condition and times of day to assess the impacts of different lighting conditions.

5. Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

The prohibition(s) of waiting at the side road junction will be subject to a traffic order which will undergo consultation and advertising in the usual way. Members may wish to consider delegating approval to implement the restriction(s) to Chief Officer in consultation with the local member and the Chair

6. Financial Considerations

Estimated cost of the proposals is subject to detail designs and will be funded from the Lines and Signs budgets in the 2022/23 programme.

7. Legal Considerations

There are no specific legal considerations.

8. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

The proposal to cut back trees and vegetation is subject to specialist advice.

9. Equality Considerations

None.

10. Risk Management Considerations

This policy/proposal has been assessed and all necessary safeguards or action have been taken/included to safeguard the Council's position.

11. Public Health Impact

None.

12. Conclusions

It is concluded the proposed measures are all that can be implemented to raise awareness of other traffic, maximise visibility and to minimise the impact of the natural light conditions.

Meg Booth
Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

Electoral Divisions: Newton Abbot South, Ipplepen & The Kerswells

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for enquiries: Simon Garner

Room No: M8, Great Moor House, Bittern Road, Exeter

Tel No: 0345 155 1004

Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
------------------	------	-----------

Nil

sg220222teighn
sc/cr/Shaldon Hill Newton Abbot Traffic Safety Review Progress Report
02 230222