

Mary Tavy: Petition to Reduce Speed Limit

Report of the Director for Climate Change, Environment and Transport.

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 approve the recommendations contained within this report.

1. Summary

This report informs members of actions taken subsequent to the presentation of a petition to HATOC to reduce the speed limit on the approach to Mary Tavy on the A386.

2. Introduction

At a meeting of the West Devon HATOC members on the 25 March 2022 the Chair reported on a request from Mary Tavy Parish Council for a speed reduction to 40 mph at the A386 between the Mary Tavy village sign and the 30-mph speed limit that commenced near the Station Road junction. Katherine Anness (Clerk) referred to a petition comprising 470 signatories for a 40-mph limit and also offered to email further information/case studies to the Officers for review.

John Fewings reported on the personal injury record (only 2 since 2016) and Simon Garner reported on the national Department of Transport guidance/policy for speed limits (which applied to all highway authorities) which related to a number of factors for example personal injury rates, road geometry/classification, composition of users and local characteristics and any decision to reduce speed limits would not be dependent on any one single factor. He advised that the current speed limit conformed to existing national guidance and was appropriate taking account of the factors referred to and in accordance with local County Council policy (as recommended by previous colleagues).

During discussions with the Parish Council representatives, it was ascertained that the concerns were that drivers on the A road were approaching the junction too quickly because they were unaware of its presence, making it hazardous for drivers to slow down to turn right because drivers following behind may not slow down. Although lowering the speed limit is not possible other options and alternatives could be investigated. The Parish Council suggested that the warning sign prior to the bend was not easily visible as it lies outside the natural eye-line of approaching drivers.

It was AGREED that Simon Garner review the site with regard to other factors such as the position of the existing warning signs, road layout and hazards or distractions for drivers and report his findings/options and recommendations to a future meeting.

3. Proposal

The site audit undertaken by the Traffic Orders, Policy and Programme Team identified a combination of five separate traffic sign/line installations which advise approaching drivers of the junction ahead or the need to reduce speed (photographs Appendix A). It is concluded that no additional signs can be justified, although it is acknowledged that when verge-side vegetation is left uncut some of the signs will be obscured. It is recommended that no further action is taken.

4. Options/Alternatives

The DfT Regulations 'Setting Local Speed Limits' prohibit the reduction of a speed limit specifically to address the issue of a specific feature in the road, including a junction or sharp bend; warning signs are to be used in these situations. Buffer (or transitional) speed limits e.g. short lengths of 40 mph between a national limit and a 30 mph limit, are not to be implemented. Speed limits must be set using the technical guidance so that a consistent approach is taken, so that drivers can relate the speed limit to the character of the road and know what to expect and how to behave. The current speed limits confirm to the guidance and therefore cannot be changed.

The Personal Injury Collision (PIC) data show no recorded incidents at or near the junction within the current 5-year analysis period. One Serious Injury incident occurred north of the junction, but this involved a single vehicle and was attributable to driver error/behaviour (Figure 1). The data does not justify any road safety interventions.

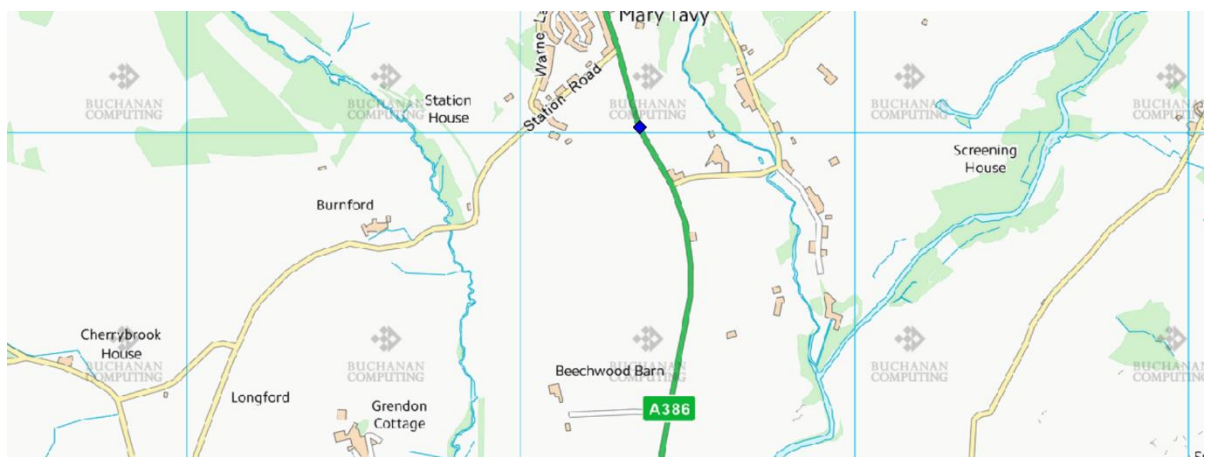


Figure 1: Personal Injury Collision Data

5. Representations

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The petition and the information/case studies were received and carefully considered as part of this review.

6 Strategic Plan

The recommendation is based on analysis of technical data to ensure interventions are only undertaken when justified, so that resources are allocated where they are needed and achieve value, and that signing is used consistently.

7. Financial Considerations

There are no financial considerations.

If the speed limit were to be changed a Traffic Regulation Order and additional and road markings would be required, this would need to be costed and funding identified.

8. Legal Considerations

The lawful implications of the recommendations have been considered and taken into account in the preparation of this report.

9. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

There are no environmental impacts.

10. Equality Considerations

There are no such considerations.

11. Risk Management Considerations

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

There is always a risk that drivers will fail to take due care and attention and will fail to look at the signs or adjust their behaviour accordingly, but this is beyond the control of the highway authority. It is considered that the existing sign provision already exceeds the reasonable level and that every reasonable measure to alert drivers of the presence of the junction has already been taken.

12. Public Health Impact

There are no public health impacts.

13. Reasons for Recommendations

PIC data does not justify road safety intervention. The existing speed limits conform to guidance and policy. The number of traffic signs advising of the junction greatly exceeds what would be considered the normal requirement. There would be no value in taking additional engineering measures. Resources should be allocated at sites where there is justification for intervention based on data and reliable evidence.

Meg Booth
Director for Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Electoral Division: Mary Tavy

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
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Nil

sg300622wdh
sc/cr/Mary Tavy Petition to Reduce Speed Limit
03 300622

Appendix 1 To CET/22/29

Warning Sign



Slow Marking and Gateway Sign



Slow Marking and Warning Sign

Legend

Northcote House Publishers



Advanced Direction Sign

Legend

Northcote House Publishers



Direction Sign

Legend

Northcote House Publishers

