

HIW/17/20

West Devon Highways and Traffic Orders Committee
16 March 2017

Request for 30mph Speed Limit through Lewdown and Cross Roads

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 request for a 30mph Speed Limit through Lewdown is not supported.

1. Background/Introduction

A petition for a 30mph speed limit on the C822 through Lewdown, containing 119 signatures, was received on 20 December 2016. The current speed limit through the village is 40mph.

2. Main Text/Proposal

The C844, which runs through Lewdown, is the former A30 Trunk Road. As such, there are sections of road which are straight and wide and of a generally high standard. The road still functions as a Heavy Goods Vehicle access to many commercial and agricultural premises, and is the official diversion route when incidents on the A30 dual carriageway require an alternative route to be available.

The road environment through Lewdown is wide and straight with excellent visibility. Limited parking occurs on the main carriageway as most properties fronting the road have the benefit of off road parking.

Traffic speeds, recorded in September 2010 and September 2016, are consistent with a 40mph speed limit. Introduction a lower speed limit is likely to lead to significant issues of non-compliance and calls for Police enforcement.

There have been no reported collisions within the 40mph speed limit, or within a mile either side, within the last five years.

3. Options/Alternatives/Discussion

The 40mph Speed limit in Lewdown and Cross Roads was introduced in 1996 some five years after the road ceased to be a Trunk Road. The limit was introduced in line with Department of Transport guidance at the time.

The high degree of compliance with the existing 40mph speed limit, and the lack of any collisions over the past five years, both indicate that a 40mph speed limit is correct for this road.

County Council Speed Limit Policy now recognises that 30mph is the correct speed limit within communities and that national speed limit is the appropriate limit between communities. Whilst this indicates that the County Council will in general support communities wishing for a 30mph speed limit to be introduced, there is no specific budget

available to support this, unless the site is identified as having a significant speed compliance issues or speed related casualty history.

Where a Community wishes to fund the introduction of a 30mph speed limit the County Council will assist subject to engineering and road safety concerns being satisfied. These would include a realistic assessment of existing speeds, collision history, potential for engineering measures to support compliance with the speed limit along with the costs and side effects of any engineering or traffic calming being considered.

For example, if speeds are currently known to be well above 30mph it is likely that some drivers will ignore a 30mph speed limit and will be tempted to overtake drivers who do abide by the new limit. In a scenario where there are currently no reported injury collisions, loss of consensus over the appropriate speed may actually lead to collisions occurring.

A Community is defined as being at least 600m in length and having a minimum of 20 frontages visible on the road.

- The built up area of Lewdown is in excess of 600m in length and has more than 20 frontages on the road. Lewdown is separated from Cross Roads by an undeveloped section of road for over 400m. Lewdown would therefore meet the initial policy requirement in terms of length and frontages.
- Crossroads has 12 frontages on the road and is just over 400m in length. The settlement includes the School as well as Jethro's club and Ardoch Lodge. Cross Roads would not meet the initial policy requirement in terms of length and number of frontages.

Reducing the speed limit to 30mph would be likely to lead to significant issues of non-compliance and enforcement unless substantial sums are spent on effective traffic calming measures on this route. In addition to the costs, installation of traffic calming on routes used by large numbers of HGV's can have significant environmental effects in terms of noise and vibration. Where older properties front the road, ground borne vibration may also have an effect on foundations.

4. Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

A petition requesting the speed limit was received on 20 December 2017. The local County Council Member has asked that the petition be considered by this Committee.

5. Financial Considerations

A Traffic Regulation Order would be required, and the existing speed limit signing would have to be removed. The road is street lit and so a 30mph speed limit would only be signed at the terminal points, although the street lighting would need to be checked to ensure that it is consistent through the village.

In order to ensure that the speed limit is self-enforcing, effective traffic calming measures would need to be considered.

No budget has been identified for these works.

6. Environmental Impact Considerations

There are not considered to be any environmental impact considerations in regards to this scheme.

7. Equality Considerations

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

11. Recommendations

Given the collision history and recorded vehicle speeds it is recommended that the speed limit through Lewdown and Cross Roads remains at 40mph.

David Whitton
Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

Electoral Division: Okehampton Rural

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
Petition		

jf210217wdh
sc/cr/request for 30mph speed limit through Lewdown
03 070317

