

Request for extension of 30mph speed limit on St Marychurch Road, and alteration of the Aller Brake Road junction, Newton Abbot

Report of the Acting 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 historic data on collisions on St Marychurch Road be noted, and the situation be kept under review in future years; and**
- (c) the data on the number of vehicles contravening the turning bans at the Aller Brake Road be noted and a request made for further enforcement.**

1. Background/Introduction

The local Member has asked this Committee to consider extending the 30mph speed limit on St Marychurch Road from its current extent, just to the south east of the junction with Newtake Rise, to a position south east of the junction with Twickenham Road, a distance of approximately 425 metres.

St Marychurch Road has historically been used as an alternative route by drivers trying to avoid congestion on the old A380 through Kingskerswell. The opening of the South Devon Highway (SDH) in December 2015, and the alteration of a number of junctions in the area, has meant that the main route between Newton Abbot and Torbay has much reduced congestion levels and traffic flow along this alternative route has reduced by 30%.

At the meeting of this Committee on 3 November 2016 it was agreed that any decision on St Marychurch Road and the Aller Brake junction would be deferred until one year's collision data is available following the opening of the SDH. This data is now available.

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.

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 from the junction with Newtake Rise to the junction with Twickenham Road shows that there were 7 collisions, all resulting in slight injury, in the five years 2011 to 2015. Of these only one, where a driver failed to negotiate a bend, could be considered to be speed related. There have been no recorded collisions in 2016 (i.e. since the opening of the SDH). This is well below the threshold at which any action would normally be considered.

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. The legal process of changing the speed limit involves a formal consultation. The views of the Police, as the enforcing authority, are important as part of the consultation.

In the particular case of the section of St Marychurch Road with its junction at Twickenham Road and the new Aller Brook Road junction, the changes to the road layout do not change the assessment against agreed Speed Limit Policy, taking account of collision data, that a lower speed limit is not appropriate. However, as with all schemes that change the layout of the highway, the performance of the new layout will be reviewed periodically so that any necessary actions can be identified.

Junction with Aller Brake Road

Prior to the construction of the South Devon Highway, road users were able to turn towards Newton Abbot at the bottom of Aller Brake Road.

This manoeuvre was removed by the new scheme, due to the inability to turn across the dual carriageway. Following consultation with the community the ability to turn towards Newton Abbot was reinstated via a new restricted junction at the top of Aller Brake Road.

This junction has been designed to allow road users to turn right into Aller Brake Road and left out, on to St Marychurch Road towards Newton Abbot. The movements at the junction were restricted to limit the use of Aller Brake Road as a cut through, which would have resulted in additional vehicles using this residential street. In addition, an all movements junction would have required the removal of a mature oak tree at the top of Aller Brake Road. The geometry and layout of the junction has been restricted as much as possible to reduce the ability of vehicles to turn right onto St Marychurch Road or left into Aller Brake Road whilst maintaining an adequate swept path for buses and large vehicles, such as refuse lorries.

A video survey of the junction was taken on the 22, 23, 24 and 25 February 2017 to determine the number of vehicles that are contravening the turning bans. The results are summarised in appendix 2. Peak times were examined over the four days and an average of just under two vehicles each hour were found to be contravening the right turn out of Aller Brake Road and just under one vehicle each hour contravening the left turn in to Aller Brake Road each hour. It would appear that a small number of vehicles are regular offenders, and police enforcement may therefore be the most suitable solution.

It is proposed that the illegal manoeuvres and collision records at the junction will continue to be monitored. The data will be discussed with the Police, who are responsible for the enforcement of illegal manoeuvres.

3. Options/Alternatives

The use of gateway or nameplate signing has been considered, but the nature of this section of road, tree lined with no verges, means that this option is not practical.

4. Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

No consultation has been undertaken. If the speed limit was 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.

Alteration of the Aller Brake Road junction would have a significant cost, and there is currently no budget available.

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.

Alteration of the Aller Brake Road junction to allow vehicles to turn left into, and to turn right out of, Aller Brake Road would be lead to more traffic in this residential area.

10. Public Health Impact

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

11. Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations

Given the low number of collisions where speed is a factor, and that no collisions have occurred since the opening of the SDH, it is considered appropriate that the speed limit remains at 40mph on this section of road in line with the County Council's policies.

Given the low number of illegal manoeuvres at the Aller Brake Road junction, and that it appears to be a small number of regular offenders, it is recommended that the police be consulted on options for enforcement.

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Acting Chief Officer for Highways, Infrastructure Development and Waste

Electoral Divisions: Newton Abbot South, Ipplepen & The Kerswells

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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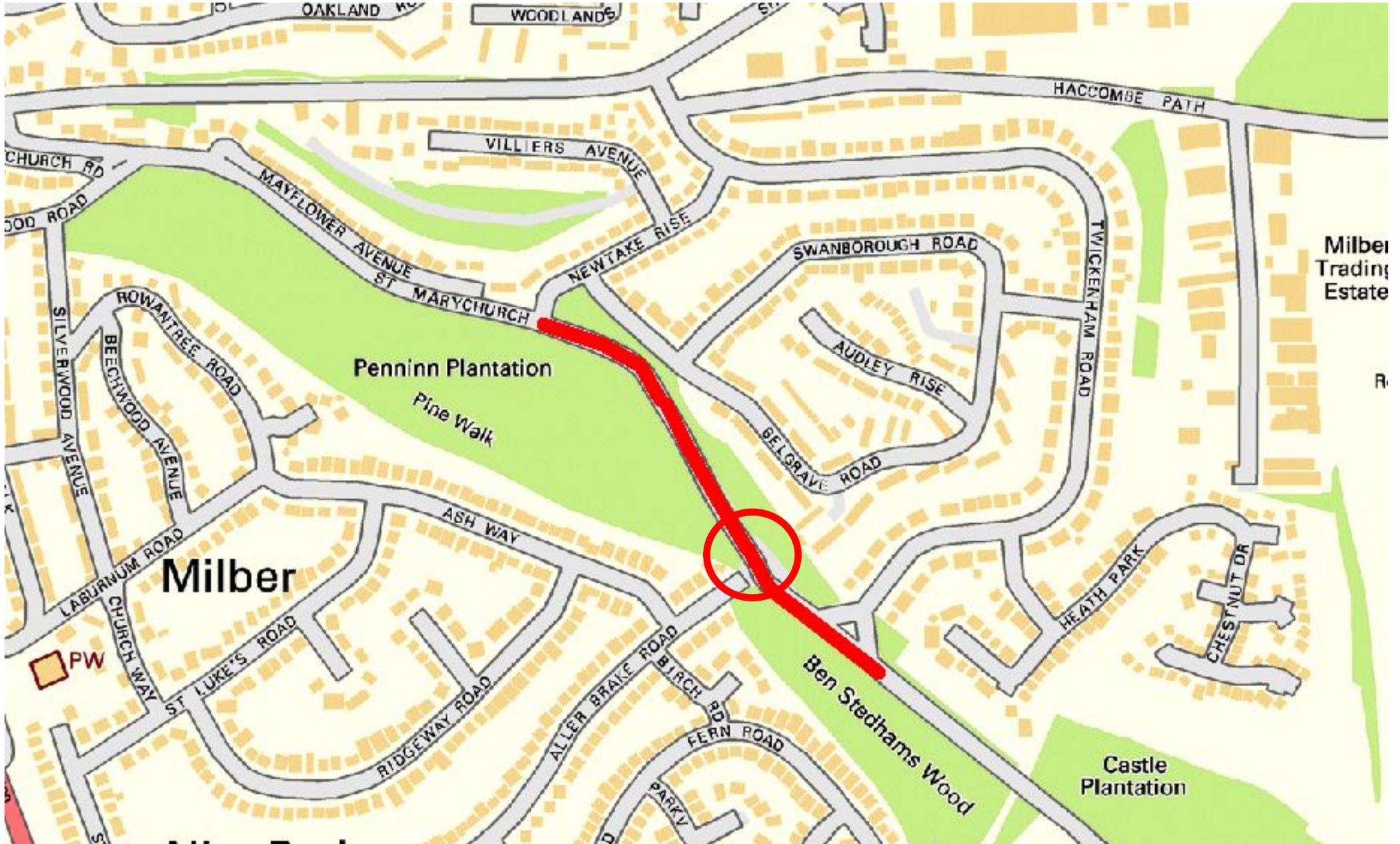
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Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
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None

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Appendix 1: Plan of St Marychurch and Aller Brake Roads



**Appendix II
To HIW/17/63**

Contravention of Turning Movements at St Marychurch Road and Aller Brake Road junction

Date	Time	<i>Right turn out of Aller Brake Road</i>	<i>Left turn into Aller Brake Road</i>
22/02/17 (Wednesday)	AM (07:30 - 09:30)	4	4
	PM (15:30 - 17:30)	5	4
	Total	9	8
23/02/17 (Thursday)	AM (07:30 - 09:30)	6	0
	PM (15:30 - 17:30)	3	1
	Total	9	1
24/02/17 (Friday)	AM (07:30 - 09:30)	5	1
	PM (15:30 - 17:30)	4	2
	Total	9	3
25/02/17 (Saturday)	AM (07:30 - 09:30)	3	1
	PM (15:30 - 17:30)	1	1
	Total	4	2
Overall Total		31	14