

Briefing Note for Calne LHFIF

Area Board Issue 3-23-22 – Stockley and Heddington – Request for Speed limit changes and village gateways.

Background

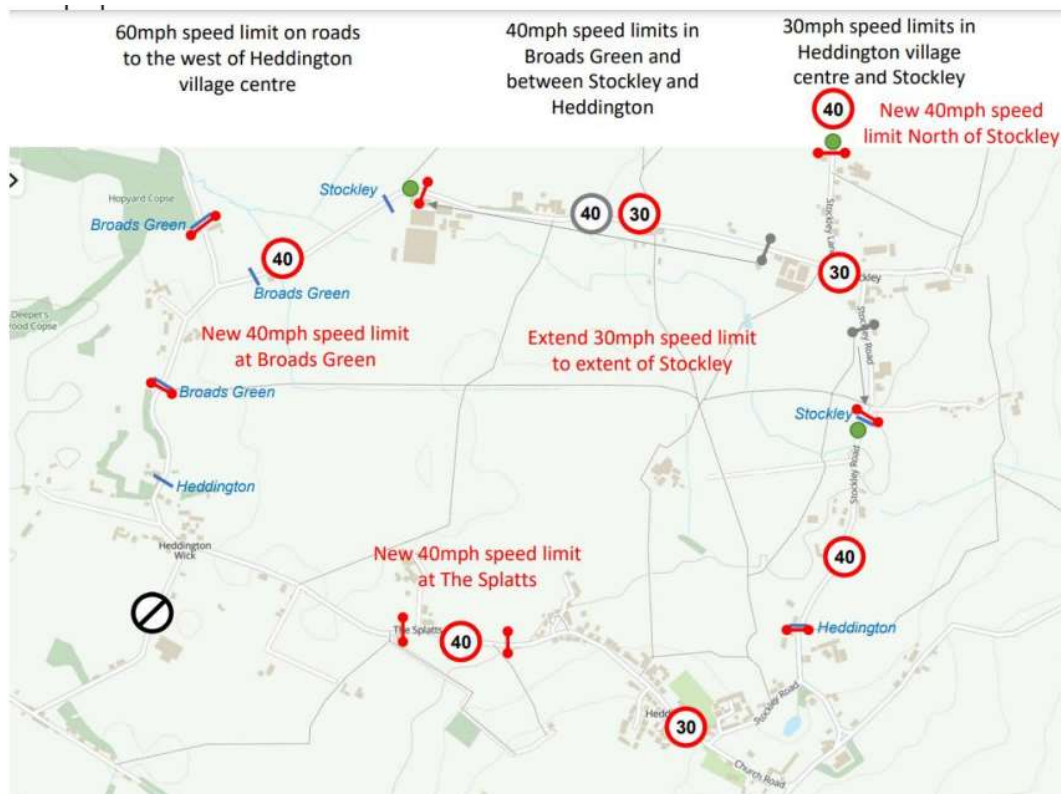
Residents of Stockley are concerned about speeding traffic and have a strong perception of motorists “rat-running” in the area, to avoid congestion in Calne town centre. They also feel that traffic volumes have increased since the development of Cherhill View. Pedestrians feel vulnerable as there are no footways.

A traffic survey was undertaken in January 2022, within the 30mph speed limit on Stockley Lane and this recorded 85th percentile speed of 38.1mph and 59.1% of vehicles exceeding the speed limit.

A check of the Collision Database covering the most recent 36 month period shows that no personal injury collisions have been recorded here.

Residents have requested a review of the speed limits in the area, requesting the following:

- Extend the 30mph speed limit west through Stockley Common to Willowbrook Farm, covering the full extent of the settlement of Stockley.
- Provide short 40mph “buffer” speed limits in advance of the settlements of Stockley and Heddington to act as a transition from the National Speed Limit. These “buffers” would cover Stockley Lane (to the north of Stockley), Broads Green (to the west of Stockley) and The Splatts (to the west of Heddington).
- Provide new rural village signs (in conjunction with “gates”) at village entrances to alert drivers to the likelihood of encountering pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and farm vehicles.



The photograph below (fig.1) shows an example of the village nameplate requested:

Figure 1. Example rural village name plate



Current Provisions

Stockley and Heddington are both partly covered by 30mph speed limits, with a 40mph speed limit between the two villages and along the lane from the centre of Stockley towards the hamlet of Broads Green.

There are some white village gateways in situ at the entrances to the villages, on Stockley Rd (south of Stockley) , Stockley Lane (North of Stockley village) and there are numerous village nameplates identifying, Stockley, Heddington and Broads Green.

It should be noted that whilst the original request for the changes has come from Calne Without Parish Council, the area falls between two boundaries and also includes an area covered by Heddington Parish Council. Both Parish Councils would need to agree these proposals and jointly part fund any recommendations.

Recommendations

To alter any speed limits within the area, a formal speed limit assessment will be required by consultants Atkins Realis, therefore it is important to evaluate areas which have a likelihood of meeting the criteria set by Wiltshire Council and the Department for Transport (DfT).

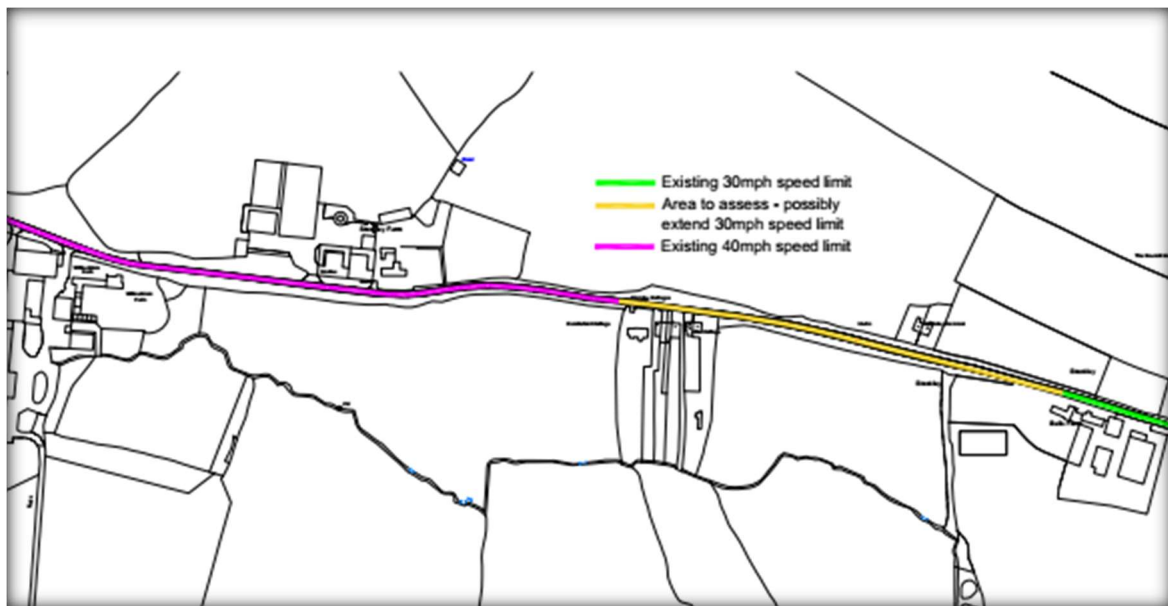
A Wiltshire Council Traffic Engineer has carried out a desktop exercise, as well as a site visit to consider the requests.

- *Extension to 30mph speed limits:*

It is important to consider guidance on setting 30mph speed limits, set out by the DfT Advisory Leaflet 01/04; Village Speed Limits. This guidance is based on the amount of frontage development, with a requirement for 20 or more houses over a minimum length of 600m. The length can be reduced to 400m, when the density of the development exceeds 20 or more

houses, or reduced further to 300m if there are key buildings such as shops, church or schools along the road. Frontage development is based on only those houses that front onto the main road and does not include groups of houses that access the main road from a side road. Frontage development must achieve an average of 3 houses per 100m throughout the length. This ensures the appropriate reinforcement of a village environment to a motorist.

With the above guidance in mind, it is unlikely the requested length of extension to the 30mph speed limit West or South of Stockley would meet the criteria, since there are longer lengths of open countryside between the minimal residences. However, since there are some residences near the existing 30mph speed limit (West of Stockley) this could mean the speed limit may meet the criteria to be extended by approximately 400m and it is recommended a formal speed limit assessment is undertaken for the area shown below (in yellow):

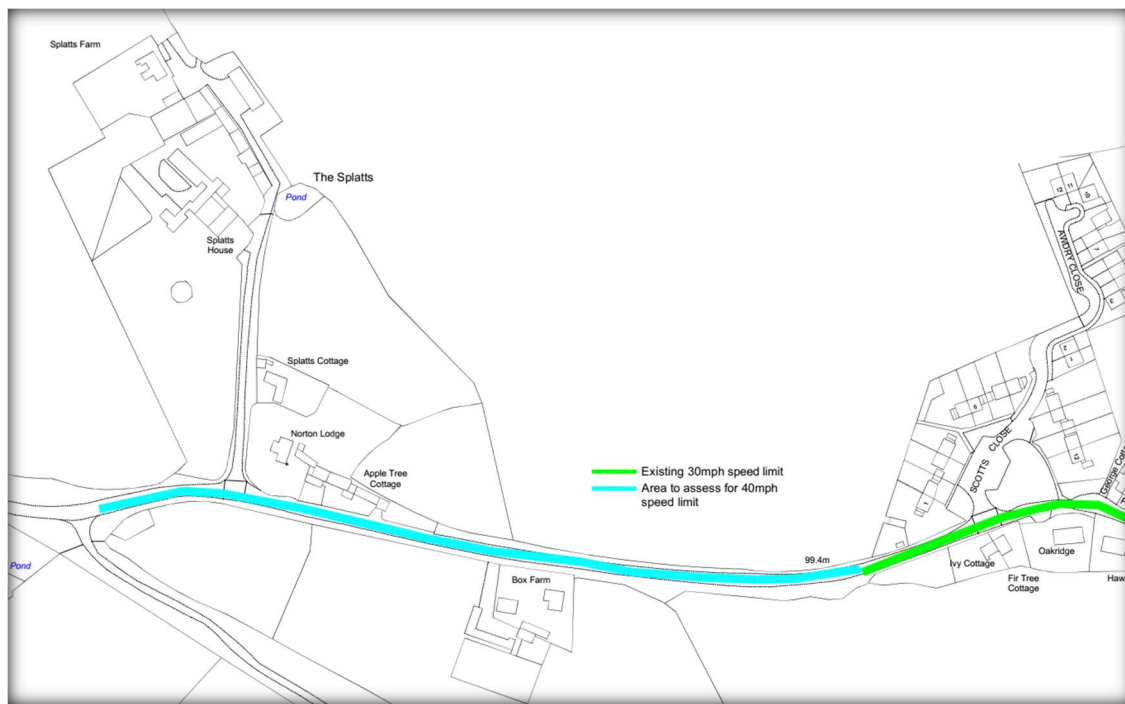


- 40mph “buffer” speed limits:

DfT Guidance “Setting Local Speed Limits” states it may be appropriate to use a short length of 40mph as a transition between a length of road subject to a lower speed limit, for example, on the outskirts of villages or urban areas with adjoining intermittent development. However, the use of such transitional limits should be restricted to sections of road where immediate speed reduction would cause risks or is likely to be less effective.

The request to extend the 40mph speed limit on Stockley Lane (to the north of Stockley) and Broads Green (to the west of Stockley), is not considered appropriate because the roads in this area have very minimal frontages, mostly consisting of farm building entrances or houses set very far back from the road, as well as the majority of the area being open space, with no development at all. These areas would not lend themselves well to a 40mph speed limit and it is likely if one was put in place, because there is no change to the existing environment to the driver, the speed limit would be less effective. It is recommended the existing 40mph speed limits in this area are retained.

The area known as The Splatts (to the west of Heddington) is slightly different in terms of its environment, having a collection of houses closer to the outskirts of Heddington village itself. It is considered this may lend itself to a 40mph buffer on approach to the existing 30mph as you enter the main village. Therefore, it is recommended a formal speed limit assessment be completed in this area, to identify if this would be possible in the area shown below (highlighted in cyan):



- *Village gateways and signing:*

Unfortunately, the design of the rural village nameplate in the photo supplied is not advised because DfT Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 3 (2019) states that when a speed limit sign is mounted with a town or village boundary sign, the sign should be a simple design to avoid it being a distraction to drivers. If the village boundary sign is being placed in a location where there are no speed limit terminal signs required, then consideration can be made for a sign with additional symbols, however if a speed limit terminal sign is required in the same location, an alternative arrangement could be as per the design below:



Site observations show there are a number of village nameplates identifying the areas of Stockley, Heddington and Broads Green. It is considered the location of some of these nameplates may need to be reviewed to align them with the start of the built up areas of the villages or hamlets themselves, along with consideration for additional village gateways. The locations of any new village gates can coincide with framing the entrance to the villages and hamlets, which should aid motorists in the area to become more aware they are entering a change of environment.

Any new locations for village nameplates and gates will need to be discussed with a Parish Council representative from each area to find the most appropriate and effective places.

Potential Costs

At this stage, it is not possible to provide a full cost estimate, as there is assessment work required in order to identify the requirements of village gateways and nameplates, as well as any outcome to consultations on Speed Limit changes. However, the following costs can be taken in consideration:

£3100 (Speed Limit Assessment)

£3000 (Advertising any Traffic Regulation Order associated with speed limit changes)

Sarah Anderson
Traffic Engineer

10/10/2024