

Committee:	Regulatory Planning Committee
Date:	19 October 2016
Report by:	Director of Communities, Economy and Transport
Title of Report	The East Sussex (Various Roads, Jarvis Brook) (30 mph and 40mph Speed Limit) Order 201*
Purpose of Report	To consider the objections received in response to the consultation on the draft Traffic Regulation Order for the proposed 30mph and 40mph speed limit on various roads in Jarvis Brook.
Contact Officer:	Michael Higgs – 01273 482106
Local Member:	Councillors Stogdon and Tidy

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Committee is recommended to:

- 1. Not uphold the objections to the draft Order as set out in Appendix 2 of this report; and**
 - 2. Recommend to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport that the Order be made as advertised.**
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CONSIDERATION BY DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES, ECONOMY AND TRANSPORT.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** As part of our review of speed limits on rural A and B class roads it is proposed to reduce the existing 60mph national speed limit on the B2100 Rotherfield Road to 40mph. As part of the proposal it was also agreed to introduce a 30mph speed limit on part of the C209 Treblers Road and U7768 Tubwell Lane. A Location Plan indicating the extent of the proposed changes is included in Appendix 1.
- 1.2** A consultation was carried out with interested parties between 3 September 2015 and 25 September 2015 and 3 objections to the proposals were received.
- 1.3** Two of the 3 objectors would have liked to see the proposed 40mph speed limit on the B2100 Rotherfield Road reduced to 30mph. The other objector would have liked the proposed 40mph speed limit to extend further to the east to meet with the existing 30mph speed limit in Rotherfield.
- 1.4** The proposed Order was advertised on-site and in the local press between 18 March 2016 and 13 April 2016 and no further objections were received. A copy of the proposed Order is included in Appendix 3.

- 1.5 The objectors were contacted to clarify our position in respect to this matter and 2 of the objections were withdrawn. The remaining objector still wishes for the proposed 40mph speed limit on the B2100 Rotherfield Road to be reduced to 30mph. The objection received is summarised in Appendix 2. A full copy of the original correspondence received on the proposals is provided in the Members Room.
- 1.6 The crash data provided to us by Sussex Police indicates that there has been one serious injury crash and 3 slight injury crashes in the last 5 years on the roads subject to this proposed Order. A plan indicating the location and severity of the injury crashes is included in Appendix 4.

2 Comments and Appraisal

- 2.1 The predominant factors we have to consider when we are determining a speed limit are the character and appearance of the road and the average speed of traffic already using the road. It is recognised nationally that the majority of drivers travel at the speed they consider to be safe for the conditions of the road. The average speed also reflects the speed that most drivers consider to be appropriate for the conditions of the road. National guidance therefore recommends that local highway authorities align the speed limit so that the average speed is at, or just below the posted speed limit. This approach has been proven to ensure the speed limit is observed by the majority of drivers.
- 2.2 A speed survey carried out on the B2100 Rotherfield Road between 17 September 2015 and 24 September 2015 recorded the average speed to be 38mph eastbound and 40mph westbound with 85th percentile speeds (the speed that 15% of the drivers are exceeding) of 44mph eastbound and 46mph westbound. The location of the survey and a summary of the results is included in Appendix 5.
- 2.3 In our experience reducing a speed limit with signs and lines alone does not automatically slow down traffic. Research carried out by the Transport Research Laboratory supports this and indicates that lowering a speed limit without engineering measures reduces the average speed of drivers by about 1 or 2mph. As a result a 30mph speed limit with signs and lines alone would not produce the corresponding reduction in driver speeds on this part of the B2100 Rotherfield Road to support a 30mph speed limit.
- 2.4 It also should be noted that we would not be allowed to provide 30mph repeater signs or roundels at regular intervals along the road if a 30mph speed limit was introduced. This is because there is a system of street lighting on this part of the B2100 Rotherfield Road and national legislation does not allow 30mph repeater signs on roads with street lighting.
- 2.5 It is important that 30mph speed limits are retained for the most built up areas with continuous properties directly fronting the road. If we were to extend the existing 30mph speed limit further to the east along the Rotherfield Road there is a risk that it will dilute the 30mph speed limit at the railway bridge and on the more built up part of the B2100 Crowborough Hill. We would also have to remove the existing 30mph terminal signs that are located near to Western Road and Mottins Hill junction.

- 2.6 A road is generally safer when all drivers are travelling at, or close to the posted speed limit. A 30mph speed limit on this part of the B2100 Rotherfield Road would be set well below the speed the majority of drivers consider appropriate to travel. As a result drivers may take a risk and overtake any slower driver that was observing the 30mph speed limit.
- 2.7 The length of the B2100 Rotherfield Road where the objector is proposing a 40mph speed limit is relatively straight and wide with most of the buildings set back from the road. As a result it does not give a driver sufficient visual message to support a 30mph speed limit. To introduce an effective 30mph speed limit it would be necessary to introduce engineering measures to slow down drivers in accordance with the lower limit. The type of measures that would be required would be very expensive and due to its relatively good safety record the cost of traffic calming cannot be justified at the present time. Some photographs indicating the character and appearance of the B2100 Rotherfield Road are included in the presentation slides that will be shown to the Committee.
- 2.8 The start of the proposed 40mph speed limit was chosen as the location coincides with the narrower part of the road where the buildings and businesses become visible to drivers. Locating the speed limit terminal signs on the part of the road where the development becomes visible helps to reinforce the visual message for drivers to reduce their speed. The position also offers good visibility of the terminal signs for vehicles coming down the hill from Rotherfield.
- 2.9 The 30mph speed limits on Tubwell Lane and Treblers Road are being proposed as the geometry and alignment of these roads mean that the lower limit will be relatively self enforcing.

3. Conclusion and reasons for approval

- 3.1 The results of the speed survey that was carried out on the B2100 Rotherfield Road clearly indicate that it is most appropriate to reduce the existing 60mph national speed limit to 40mph as this will help to make the road safer by achieving the best compliance with the posted speed limit.
- 3.2 It is therefore recommended, for the reasons set out in this report, that the Planning Committee does not uphold the objection to the Traffic Regulation Order and recommends to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport that the Order be made as advertised.

RUPERT CLUBB

Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None