

Report to: Regulatory – Planning Committee

Date of meeting: 23 May 2018

Report By: Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Title: Traffic Regulation Order – 20 mph speed limit (Uckfield High Street) Area

Purpose: To consider the objections received in response to the consultation on the draft Traffic Regulation Order to introduce a 20 mph speed limit in the area of High Street, Uckfield, East Sussex

Contact Officer: Christopher Tree – Tel. 01273 482247

Local Member: Councillor Claire Dowling

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Planning Committee is recommended:

- (1) To not uphold the objections to the draft Traffic Regulation Order as set out in Appendix 2 of this report; and**
- (2) To recommend to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport that the draft Traffic Regulation Order be made as advertised.**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In December 2012, the Lead Member for Transport and Environment approved a two-stage approach to mitigate the impact of development generated traffic on the roads in the town centre of Uckfield taking into account existing and future development allocations. At this meeting, Stage 1 of the improvements to High Street from Framfield Road to Bell Lane was approved and construction was completed in November 2014. In September 2015, the Lead Member approved Stage 2 of the improvements which focussed on the section of the High Street north of Bell Lane up to Church Street; construction was completed in September 2016. Development contributions from committed development in Uckfield and surrounding settlements have been secured by Wealden District Council (WDC) by means of Section 106 agreements and were used to fund these transport mitigation measures.

1.2 The Stage 2 improvements included the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit on sections of the High Street, Church Street, Bell Lane and the side roads and adjoining cul-de-sacs using signs alone. The aim of the 20 mph speed limit is to improve the road safety, the living environment on Uckfield High Street and surrounding area and travelling conditions for pedestrians and cyclists, thereby encouraging more people to make these modes of transport their first choice for more of their local journeys. However, due to an oversight during the construction of the Stage 2 improvements the draft Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) associated with the 20 mph speed limit was not advertised. In addition, a number of the terminal signs associated with the entry points into the 20 mph speed limit were either missing or incorrectly located. This situation would have been confusing for drivers as the start and the finish of the 20 mph speed limit area was not made clear. All of the terminal and repeater signs were subsequently taken down with a view to resolving this situation by the introduction of the appropriate TRO.

1.3 Prior to the advertisement of the draft Traffic Regulation Order, consultation was undertaken with statutory consultees including Sussex Police, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, South East Coast Ambulance Service, the local bus operators, Uckfield Town Council, Wealden District Council and the Local County Council Member. No objections were received during this stakeholder consultation.

1.4 On Friday 2 February 2018 the County Council gave notice under its powers set out in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 that it was proposing to make a draft Traffic Regulation Order to introduce a 20mph speed limit on roads within the High Street area of Uckfield. A copy of the draft TRO is included in Appendix 1. The roads to be included are shown on the enclosed location plan. The draft Order was advertised in the local press, statutory consultees were notified and notices were placed on lamp columns in all the affected roads. A period of three weeks was allowed for any comments to be received. This period ended on Friday 23 February 2018. The TRO information was also available on the East Sussex Highways website.

2 COMMENTS AND APPRAISAL

2.1 During the formal consultation period, in total, four separate representations were received to the draft Traffic Regulation Order. These consisted of one in support of the proposed scheme, and three objecting to the proposals. Full copies of the representations are available in the Members' Room. One of the objections was subsequently withdrawn and the remaining two representations objecting to the scheme can be summarised as follows:

- the 20 mph speed limit should be extended to include other roads;
- the proposed 20 mph speed limit serves no purpose;
- the 20 mph speed limit cannot be enforced;
- it will have no effect on road safety;
- the expense cannot be justified;
- 20 mph at night is unnecessary; and
- it will increase vehicle emissions.

2.2 Each objection has been considered individually and a summary of the objections and the officer comments on each of these is set out in Appendix 2. It is not considered that the objections warrant the modification or withdrawal of the proposal and the objections should not, therefore, be upheld.

3 CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The Stage 2 town centre improvements included the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit on sections of the High Street, Church Street, Bell Lane and the side roads and adjoining cul-de-sacs using signs alone. The aim of the 20 mph speed limit is to improve the road safety, the living environment on Uckfield High Street and surrounding area and travelling conditions for pedestrians and cyclists, thereby encouraging more people to make these modes of transport their first choice for more of their local journeys. The results of the most recent traffic speed surveys carried out in July 2017 show that the existing speeds are appropriate for the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit using signs alone. The changes to the layout of the High Street will encourage good compliance with the new speed limit and it will be largely self-enforcing. The number of signs and road markings has been kept to a minimum to minimise the visual impact and where possible they have been located on existing street furniture.

3.2 It is recommended, for the reasons set out in this report, that the Planning Committee does not uphold the objections to the draft Traffic Regulation Order to introduce a 20 mph speed limit in Uckfield High Street area, 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
14 May 2018 CT

LOCAL MEMBER

Councillor Claire Dowling

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1. Appendix 1 (Draft Traffic Order with streets included)
2. Appendix 2 (Objections and officer comments)