

Committee: **Lead Cabinet Member for Communities and Safety**

Date: **25 October 2018**

Report By: **Director of Communities, Economy and Transport**

Title of Report: **Petition to reduce the speed limit to 30mph on Marley Lane, Battle on the length between Marley Lane Grain Store and Petley Wood Riding Stables.**

Purpose of Report: **To consider the petition for a reduced speed limit on this part of the C94, Marley Lane, Battle.**

RECOMMENDATION: The Lead Member is recommended to advise the petitioners that:

- (1) A 30mph speed limit on this part of the C94, Marley Lane, Battle does not meet the criteria and is not a priority for the County Council; and**
 - (2) There would be no objection, in principle, to a community funded 40mph speed limit being investigated.**
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1. Background Information.

1.1 At the County Council meeting on 10 July 2018 Councillor Field presented to the Chairman a 'Petition to reduce the speed to 30mph on Marley Lane, Battle on the portion between Marley Grain Store and Petley Wood Riding Stables'.

1.2 A copy of the petition is available in the Members' Room. Standing Orders provide that where the Chairman considers it appropriate, petitions are considered by the relevant Committee or Lead Member and a spokesperson for the petitioners is invited to address the Committee. The Chairman has referred this petition to the Lead Member for Communities and Safety.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 The petition is requesting that the national speed limit on the C94 Marley Lane, Battle is reduced to 30mph between Marley Lane Grain Store and Petley Wood Riding Stables. A Location Plan indicating the length of the road where the 30mph speed limit is being requested is included in Appendix 1.

2.2 The predominant factors that are considered when determining a speed limit are the number of properties that are clearly visible to drivers and the average speed of the traffic using the road. Our policy on Local Speed Limits (PS05/02) recommends that villages can be considered for a 30mph speed limit providing that there are '20 or more properties served by private accesses that adjoin the main road (on one or both sides of the road) located over a length of not less than 600 metres and are clearly visible to drivers'. A copy of our policy on Local Speed Limits is included in Appendix 2.

2.3 Although it is acknowledged that there are some properties on this part of Marley Lane the majority of the development is set back from the road and screened by vegetation so they would not provide drivers with a clear indication for the need to reduce speed. It is important drivers are provided with a consistent message that if the speed limit is 30mph, they are in a built up area with continuous properties fronting the road and clearly visible. If the use of 30mph speed limits is extended to more rural locations, like this section of Marley Lane, there is a risk that the message a 30mph speed limit provides to drivers within a more built up area will be diluted.

2.4 Two speed surveys were carried out on Marley Lane between 14 and 21 September 2018 as a result of the petition. The results of the survey outside Villa Rosa recorded average speeds of 42mph eastbound and 46mph westbound with 85th percentile speeds (the speed that 85 percent of drivers are travelling below) of 50mph eastbound and 53mph westbound. The survey outside Great Wood Place

recorded average speeds of 36mph southbound and 37mph northbound with 85th percentile speeds of 41mph southbound and 43mph northbound. A plan indicating the location of the surveys and a summary of the results is included in Appendix 3.

2.5 The research that has been carried out nationally indicates that speed limits that are introduced with signs and lines alone only reduce the average speed of traffic by about 1 or 2mph. This is also East Sussex County Council's experience from the speed limit review work that has been carried out in the County. Our policy on Local Speed Limits therefore recommends that for a 30mph to be relatively self-enforcing, they should only be introduced in locations where the average speed of traffic is already below 33mph.

2.6 The results of the speed surveys that were carried out in Marley Lane clearly show that the average speed of drivers is too high for a 30mph speed limit to be introduced with signs and lines alone. Even if the frontage development were to support a 30mph speed limit in Marley Lane, expensive engineering measures would need to be introduced to help slow the traffic down.

2.7 The crash data supplied to us by the Police indicates that there has been 1 slight personal injury crash reported between Marley Lane Grain Store and Petley Wood Riding Stables in the latest available three year period. A plan indicating the location of the crash is included in Appendix 4. At the present time, the County Council has very limited resources available for road safety including lower speed limits. The cost of the engineering measures that would be required to introduce an effective 30mph speed limit on this part of Marley Lane would not be justified at the present time due to the relatively good safety record of the road.

3. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation

3.1 A 30mph speed limit on Marley Lane between Marley Lane Grain Store and Petley Wood Riding Stables is not a priority for the County Council at the present time due to its relatively good safety record and lack of frontage development.

3.2 Although there may be no objection in principle to a 40mph speed limit at this location in Marley Lane being considered through the Community Match process, it may not achieve what the petitioners are trying to achieve as the speed survey carried out close to Great Wood Place recorded the existing average speed of the traffic to be 36mph southbound and 37mph northbound with only 19 percent of the drivers travelling above 40mph. If this option is of interest to the petitioners, the process could be explained in more detail.

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LOCAL MEMBER

Councillor Field

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Speed Survey Results (Survey No. No. 5503 and 5502)

The Petition