

Report to: Lead Member for Transport and Environment

Date of meeting: 16 January 2023

By: Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Title: Petition: To create a 30mph zone with safe road crossings on the A272 at Piltdown.

Purpose: To consider the petition for a 30mph zone, safer walk and cycle ways throughout the village and safe crossings at strategic locations between the village gateways on the A272 at Piltdown.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Lead Member is recommended to advise petitioners that:

- (1) The A272 at Piltdown does not meet the criteria for a 30mph speed limit as set out in speed limit policy PS05/02; and**
 - (2) A scheme to introduce walk and cycle ways and safe crossing solutions does not meet the benchmark score for consideration within a future Capital Programme; and**
 - (3) The petitioners may wish to contact Fletching Parish Council to determine their interest in a community funded scheme to improve pedestrian and cycling facilities in Piltdown.**
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1. Background Information

1.1. At the County Council meeting on 11 October 2022, Councillor Galley presented a petition to the Chairman of the Council. The petition states: *"We the undersigned petition the council to create a 30mph zone in the roads between the village gateways, install signage to reflect the speed limit, create safe walk and cycle ways throughout the village with safe road crossings at strategic locations.* A Location Plan is included in Appendix 1.

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 Transport and Environment.

2. Supporting Information

2.1. The A272 at Piltdown is subject to a 40mph speed limit between the western access into Old Spot Farm Shop and just east of the Ruston Bridge Road/Lodge Lane crossroads. A 50mph speed limit extends approximately 350-metres to the west and approximately 1.75km to the east. The speed limits in Piltdown are shown in Appendix 2.

2.2. Community funded white gateways were installed on the A272 at Piltdown in 2019. A pair of gateways are located at the start of the 40mph speed limit on the western side, with a single gateway on the southern side of the road approximately 70-metres west of the private access to Batts Cottage to the east. The location of the gateways is indicated in Appendix 2 with photographs in Appendix 3.

2.3. Two traffic surveys were carried out on the A272 within the extent of the existing 40mph speed limit. A third survey was carried out within the extent of the 50mph speed limit near Golf Club Lane. The location of the surveys is shown in Appendix 2.

2.4. Within the extent of the 40mph speed limit the average speed was 37mph eastbound and 42mph westbound near Ashgrove Farm Business Park. The survey near Warren House recorded average speeds of 34mph eastbound and 39mph westbound. The third survey carried out near Golf Club Lane recorded average speeds of 37mph eastbound and 40mph westbound. The locations of the speed surveys are shown in Appendix 2 with full results in Appendix 4.

2.5. Local Speed Limit Policy (PS05/02), included as Appendix 5, recommends that villages may be considered for the introduction of a 30mph speed limit providing there are “20 or more properties served by private accesses which adjoin the main road (on one or both sides of the road), located over a length of not less than 600-metres, and clearly visible to drivers” with an average speed of 33mph or below. This is in line with national guidance issued by the Department for Transport. It is acknowledged that there is some development on the A272 at Piltdown, but it is predominantly set back from the road and screened by vegetation. It does not give drivers the visual message to support a 30mph speed limit.

2.6. Reducing a speed limit with traffic signs and road markings alone only reduces average speeds by about 1 or 2mph and only when it is obvious to a driver why the speed limit has been imposed. Where average speeds are significantly above a desired speed limit engineering measures would be required to ensure that the speed limit was largely self-enforcing.

2.7. It is important that drivers are provided with a consistent message, so that they understand what is expected of them as they enter different road environments. Drivers may not automatically comply with a speed limit, if they cannot see any obvious reason for it. This can lead to a wide discrepancy (or spread) of speeds, as some drivers will try to drive at the posted speed limit and others, not seeing the need for the speed limit will continue to drive at higher speeds, resulting in inappropriate overtaking and a greater potential for collisions. The existing 40mph and 50mph speed limits on the A272 in Piltdown are therefore the most appropriate for the road environment.

2.8. The Road Safety Team use a three-year assessment period to prioritise their work. This helps to ensure that the limited resources are targeted at locations that will produce the greatest impact in terms of casualty reduction. In the latest three-years to 30/09/2022 there have been four crashes involving personal injury reported to the Police within the approximate 800-metre extent of the 40mph speed limit in Piltdown, and two injury crashes within a 500-metre radius of the Golf Club Lane/Down Street junction. Two of these included a speed related causation factor as defined by the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership. With an average daily traffic flow of 10,730 vehicles this equates to over 11 million vehicle movements in a three year period. The location of the crashes is shown in Appendix 6.

2.9. As part of this year’s Road Safety Programme, East Sussex County Council (ESCC) have identified 52 locations for further investigation. Sites are identified where at least four personal injury crashes have occurred in the latest three-years within a 25-metre radius in urban areas and a 50-metre radius in rural areas. The latest crash record does not identify any location on the A272 at Piltdown that meets these criteria.

2.10. Previous assessments of the rural A and B-class road network have not identified the A272 at Piltdown as being a priority for further investigation.

2.11. There is a bus layby with a bus stop clearway on the northern side of the A272 opposite the petrol filling station in Piltdown. There is also a bus stop on the southern side of the road just to the west of the petrol filling station near Warren House. The location of the bus stops is indicated in Appendix 7 and some photographs are provided in Appendix 3.

2.12. There is a 1-metre wide, footway on the southern side of the A272 starting at the western access to the petrol station that extends 340-metres to the west to a point just east of the access to Ashgrove Farm Business Park. There are no footways on the northern side of the road. The extent of the footway on the southern side of the A272 is also shown in Appendix 7.

2.13. ESCC has a limited amount of funding to develop local transport improvements and needs to ensure that resources are targeted to those schemes of greatest benefit to local communities. To help prioritise requests, ESCC has developed a process to determine which schemes should be funded through the Integrated Transport Programme. The request for new walk and cycle ways and safe road crossings in Piltdown has been assessed, but it did not meet the benchmark score to enable it to be considered as part of the Capital Programme.

2.14. Although new footways and cycleways with safer crossing solutions in Piltdown is not an identified priority for the County Council, the petitioners may wish to contact Fletching Parish Council to determine their interest in a community funded scheme through the Community Match

initiative. A Feasibility Study (at a cost of £500) would be required prior to a Community Match application.

3. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

3.1. It is recommended that the petitioners be advised that the A272 between the white village gateways at Piltdown does not meet the criteria for a 30mph speed limit and the existing 40mph and 50mph speed limits are the most appropriate for the road environment.

3.2. It is recommended that the petitioners be advised that walk and cycle ways and safe crossing solutions in Piltdown do not meet the benchmark score required for consideration within the future Capital Programme for transport improvements.

3.3. Although pedestrian and cycling improvements and safe crossing solutions at Piltdown are not an identified priority for the County Council, the petitioners may wish to contact Fletching Parish Council to determine their interest in a community funded scheme.

RUPERT CLUBB

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LOCAL MEMBER:

Councillor Roy Galley

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None