

Report to: Lead Member for Transport and Environment

Date of meeting: 14 October 2024

By: Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Title: Petition to improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians – Keymer Road, Ditchling.

Purpose: To consider a petition calling on the County Council to improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians on Keymer Road, Ditchling

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

- (1) A potential scheme to improve the footway, provide an alternative cycle route and install traffic calming on Keymer Road has been assessed through the approved High Level Sift process and is not a priority for the County Council at the present time; and**
 - (2) The section of Keymer Road between the Ditchling Parish Council Car Park and the County Boundary does not meet the Council's policy for a lower speed limit.**
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1 Background Information

1.1. At the County Council meeting on 7 May 2024, a petition was presented to the Chairman by Councillor Osborne on behalf of Ditchling Climate Action Network. The group are requesting the following improvements on the B2116 Keymer Road, from Ditchling Parish Council Car Park to the county boundary:

- A better footpath
- Reduced speed limits
- An alternative cycle route
- Traffic calming

1.2 Standing Orders provide that where the Chair 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. A copy of the petition is available in the Members' Room.

2 Supporting Information

2.1. Keymer Road is a B class road running east to west from Ditchling in East Sussex to Keymer in West Sussex. It is subject to the national speed limit, which starts approximately 15 metres west of the Ditchling Parish Council Car Park to the county boundary. A footway is present on the northern side for the entire length of Keymer Road and is approximately 1 metre to 1.5 metres wide. A location plan can be found at Appendix 1.

2.2. Crash data supplied by Sussex Police for the 3-year period up to 31 July 2024 shows that Keymer Road has an excellent safety record, with no crashes resulting in personal injury. A crash data plan can be found at Appendix 2.

2.3. The setting of appropriate and effective speed limits has been subject to a significant level of research. It is important drivers are provided with a consistent message, so they know what is expected of them as they enter different road environments. A predominant factor considered when determining an effective speed limit is the number of properties that are visible to drivers.

2.4. There is little to no visible frontage development on the section of Keymer Road between the car park and the county boundary. This section of road does not meet the Council's policy requirements for a lower speed limit therefore the national speed limit applies. Whilst this section of road is subject to the national speed limit, the onus is on the individual driver to drive in a safe and judicious manner, and to the conditions of the road and the surroundings through which they pass.

2.5. It is acknowledged that a 30mph speed limit applies to the road once it enters West Sussex, however it is subject to a system of street lighting and has significant frontage development and the 30mph speed limit is therefore suitable. Likewise, a 30mph speed limit applies when travelling eastbound and entering Ditchling village where the surroundings change and there is significant frontage development.

2.6. The County Council has a limited amount of funding to develop local transport improvements and needs to ensure that resources are targeted to those schemes which will be of greatest benefit to local communities. To help prioritise the numerous requests received for improvements, a process was developed to determine which schemes should be funded through the Integrated Transport Programme.

2.7. The requests for improvements to the footway, an alternative cycle route and traffic calming measures have been assessed to determine if they might be a priority for future consideration; however, they did not achieve the benchmark score to be taken forward at this time.

3 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

3.1. It is recommended that the petitioners be advised that a reduction to the existing speed limit is not appropriate for the reasons set out in paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4. It is also recommended that the petitioners be advised that schemes to improve the existing footway, provide an alternative cycle route and install traffic calming measures have been assessed and are not currently priorities for the County Council at this time.

RUPERT CLUBB

Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Contact Officer: Victoria Bartholomew

Tel. No. 01424 724284

Email: Victoria.Bartholomew@eastsussex.gov.uk

LOCAL MEMBERS

Councillor Osborne

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None