

Committee	Regulatory Planning Committee
Date	18 October 2023
Report by	Director of Communities, Economy and Transport
Subject	Traffic Regulation Order - A264 Hammerwood to Holtye (40mph & 50mph Speed Limit)
Purpose	To consider the objections received in response to the formal consultation on the draft Traffic Regulation Order for the proposed 40mph speed limit on the A264 between Hammerwood and Holtye
Contact Officer:	Michael Higgs – Tel: 07701 394506
Local Members:	Councillor Georgia Taylor

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Planning Committee is recommended to:

- 1. Not uphold the objections to the draft Order; and**
 - 2. recommend that the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport make the Traffic Regulation Order as advertised.**
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CONSIDERATION BY DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES, ECONOMY AND TRANSPORT

1. Introduction

- 1.1** As part of the Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) at the time, the County Council's Road Safety Team secured funding for a Road Safety Programme. The evidence is that 90% of killed and serious injury (KSI) crashes in East Sussex and nationally are caused by driver behaviour, or error, so specific measures were required to address these issues. The Road Safety Programme therefore developed a range of behavioural change initiatives to provide targeted interventions to reduce KSI crashes within identified high priority groups in East Sussex. The behavioural change initiatives were developed alongside a Speed Management Programme (SMP) that helped to improve road safety through speed management schemes and road safety improvements targeted at the existing highway infrastructure.
- 1.2** The project budget for the SMP was originally £274,000. It targeted the KSI crashes occurring on the rural A and B-class road network during a three-year assessment period, with a view to reducing the number of KSI crashes in the County.
- 1.3** All of the rural A and B-class roads in the County were split into shorter lengths that typically ranged from 600 metres (the minimum recommended length for a speed limit) to 1 kilometre. The average KSI crash rate was calculated for each section

and the routes were ranked according to their KSI crash rate. It was established that the average KSI crash rate on the rural A and B-class roads was 8.9 KSI crashes per 100 million vehicle kilometres travelled.

- 1.4 An initial crash study and drive through site visit was carried out on the routes that were identified as having a KSI crash rate above the county average, and those routes considered amenable to measures being introduced were progressed to detailed investigation stage to determine the most appropriate type of intervention. 25 schemes and their agreed interventions were taken forward. The A264 Hammerwood to Holtye was identified for a potential speed limit reduction to 40mph. A Location Plan is provided in Appendix 1.

2 Consultation

- 2.1 An initial consultation was carried out on the proposal, and feedback led to the formal proposal. The draft Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was advertised in the Kent and Sussex Courier on 12 May 2023. Notices and copies of the relevant plans were advertised at regular intervals along the route for a period of 25 days. The consultation closed on 5 June 2023. A copy of the Notice and draft TRO is provided in Appendix 2. The details were also available on the County Council's consultation hub for members of the public to comment.
- 2.2 Two objections to the proposal were received before the formal consultation closed on 5 June 2023. A summary of the objections that we received before the consultation closed is provided in Appendix 3. A further three letters / emails supporting the proposals were received. After the consultation closed a further two objections were received. Full copies of all the correspondence received have been made available to the Members of the Planning Committee.
- 2.3 All the objections received, including those after the consultation deadline, requested that the proposed 40mph speed limit be extended to the east of Cansiron Lane to include the Holtye Hill junction, Golf Club and White House.

3 Comments and Appraisal

- 3.1 The setting of appropriate and effective speed limits has been subject to a significant amount of national research. This has shown that changing the speed limit with traffic signs and road markings alone, only changes the average speed of the traffic by about 1 or 2mph. This is also the experience of officers from earlier speed limit review work. Speed limits are therefore set in accordance with the mean speed of traffic, as this helps to reinforce an average driver's sense of a safe speed to travel. The County Council's policy PS05/02 Local Speed Limits recommends that 40mph speed limits are appropriate on rural roads where the average speed of the traffic is below 42mph. A copy of this policy on Local Speed Limits is provided in Appendix 4.
- 3.2 A series of seven speed surveys were carried out on the A264 between Hammerwood and Holtye. A summary of the results and the extent of the existing 50mph speed limit is shown in Appendix 5. The speed surveys between the start of the existing 50mph speed limit in the west and Cansiron Lane recorded the average speed of the traffic to be typically in the region of 40mph. This would indicate that a lower 40mph speed limit here would be relatively self-enforcing and effective. A speed survey between Cansiron Lane and the start of the 50mph speed limit in the

east recorded the average speed of the traffic to be 46mph. This survey result indicates that if a 40mph speed limit is to be effective here, engineering measures appropriate to the function of the road should be investigated to reduce the average traffic speed to below 42mph.

- 3.3 A proposal to install a traffic island in the centre of the A264 at the eastern end of the existing 50mph speed limit was investigated to allow the proposed 40mph speed limit to extend past Holtye Golf Club. The preliminary design work was carried out and it established that changes to the kerb lines would be required if a traffic island to the required standard was to be provided. The quotation for the traffic island at the time in January 2019 was £67,000. Due to inflationary pressures, this cost is likely to be somewhat higher now.
- 3.4 The cost of the traffic island would have been a significant proportion of the £274,000 budget available for the Speed Management Programme (minimum of 24.5%). It is important that the resources that the Council has available for road safety are used effectively and maximise the potential for casualty reduction. If the traffic island was taken forward, it would have prevented other identified priority schemes from being progressed.
- 3.5 If the Council was to extend the proposed 40mph speed limit on the straighter part of the A264 to the east of Cansiron Lane with traffic signs alone, (without a traffic island), it is unlikely to be complied with by all drivers. This can lead to a wider discrepancy (or spread) of speeds between drivers who will drive at the posted speed limit, and others, not seeing the need for the lower speed limit, who will continue to drive at higher speeds, resulting in the potential for inappropriate overtaking and collisions.
- 3.6 Following discussions with Sussex Police, it was agreed to proceed with the 40mph speed limit to the west of Cansiron Lane and retain the existing 50mph speed limit on the straighter section to the east, where the average speed of the traffic is higher. The extent of the proposed 40mph and 50mph speed limits are shown in Appendix 6.
- 3.7 Although the existing 50mph speed limit to the east of Cansiron Lane is to be retained, some improvements to the warning signs and road markings to help highlight the Holtye Hill junction and the crossing point outside the golf club will be introduced as part of the proposal. This will include new hazard marker posts at Holtye Hill junction and the Golf Club, improved yellow backed warning signs and red surfacing with SLOW markings to increase the visual impact for drivers on both approaches. The details of these safety improvements are shown in Appendix 7. The cost estimate for the 40mph speed limit to the west of Cansiron Lane and the safety improvements at the Holtye Hill junction and golf crossing point to be introduced was £11,400 in August 2020.
- 3.8 The most recent personal injury crash data supplied to the Council by Sussex Police indicates that there has been one serious personal injury crash reported on the part of the road where the 40mph speed limit is being proposed in the three-year period up to 31 July 2023. During the same review period, there has not been any personal injury crashes reported to the Police on the part of the road that will remain 50mph. The location and severity of the personal injury crashes on this part of the A264 are shown in Appendix 8.

4 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 The speed survey results carried out indicated that engineering measures appropriate to the function of the road would be required, if an effective 40mph speed limit is to be introduced on the A264 to the east of Cansiron Lane, to include the Holtye Hill junction, the Golf Club, and White House. This is in accordance with the County Council's policy PS05/02 Local Speed Limits. This is also the view of Sussex Police.
- 4.2 A traffic island was investigated as part of the County Council's Speed Management Programme, but the cost proved to be prohibitively expensive. If a longer 40mph speed limit with a traffic island was taken forward, it would have prevented other sites identified as a priority as part of the Speed Management Programme from being taken forward.
- 4.3 It is recommended for the reasons set out in the report, that the Planning Committee does not uphold the objections, and recommends to the Director of Communities, Economy and Transport that the Traffic Regulation Order be made as advertised.

RUPERT CLUBB

Director of Communities, Economy and Transport

Background Documents

None