

## **PORTFOLIO HOLDER ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT**

<b>DATE</b>	14 June 2021
<b>REPORT OF</b>	Councillor Stewart Swinburn, Portfolio Holder Environment & Transport.
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b>	Sharon Wroot, Executive Director for Environment, Economy and Resources
<b>SUBJECT</b>	Traffic Regulation Order – Humberston Avenue: 30mph Speed Limit
<b>STATUS</b>	Open
<b>FORWARD PLAN REF NO.</b>	General Exception

### **CONTRIBUTION TO OUR AIMS**

Taking measures to permanently reduce the speed limit to 30mph on the B1219 Humberston Avenue will contribute to the Council's aim of improving the Health and Wellbeing of all road users, residents and visitors to the area by creating and maintaining a safer environment.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In recent years a number of new housing developments have been constructed in and around Humberston Avenue, which have increased pedestrian, cyclist, and vehicle volumes on Humberston Avenue. Developers contributions have also seen a number of new footways constructed on Humberston Avenue, as a result the number of pedestrian walking along this route has increased significantly. This sees the need to make the current temporary 30mph speed limit on the B1219 Humberston Avenue permanent to maintain a safe environment for all road users.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

- a) Subject to formal consultation and no material objections being received, approval be granted to the making of a Speed Limit Order to introduce a permanent 30mph speed limit on Humberston Avenue, as detailed in the Schedules to Appendix 1 and shown indicatively on drawing TR-20-08-A to Appendix 2.
- b) In the event there are unresolved material objections to the revocation Order, these are referred back to the Portfolio Holder for determination and a decision as to whether or not the Speed Limit Order be confirmed and executed.

### **REASONS FOR DECISION**

To maintain reduced vehicle speeds and maintain a safe environment for all road users on Humberston Avenue following the construction of the new residential housing developments. This type of environment is better suited to slower vehicle speeds.

## **1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES**

1.1 Planning applications were approved for three new, large residential developments, which have five vehicle accesses along Humberston Avenue. These developments will provide over 900 new residential dwellings within this location.

- Development 1 (Persimmon Homes) - 385 new properties on land to the rear of property numbers 32-65 Humberston Avenue, accessed via two new vehicle access points.
- Development 2 (Keystone Developments) - 400 homes on land south of Humberston Avenue (opposite Humberston Country Club and Humberston Academy), via two new vehicle access points.
- Development 3 (Par 3) - 121 new homes which will be accessed via Scouts Lane.

1.2 All three developments have provided improvements to Humberston Avenue including the creation of new footways, new pedestrian crossing points, bus stop upgrades to assist in facilitating travel by sustainable modes and the provision of three new zebra crossing facilities.

1.3 Humberston Avenue is a key route which links the villages of New Waltham and Humberston. A permanent 40mph speed limit applies on a section between a point west of Scouts Lane to the east of the access to Humberston Academy.

Currently, a temporary 30mph speed limit is in operation, introduced under a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) in 2017 to safely support the construction of the new housing developments and associated highway improvements. This TTRO will expire on 30 September 2021.

1.4 These new residential developments will bring a substantial increase in the number of vehicles, pedestrian and cycle movements along Humberston Avenue. It is anticipated that once all residential units are occupied many of those pedestrians and cyclists will be of school age accessing the two neighbouring academies – Tollbar Academy and Humberston Academy.

1.5 In order to mitigate the impact of the proposed residential dwellings NELC are actively promoting the use of sustainable modes of travel for residents of the new developments through the implementation of Residential Travel Plans at each of these sites. In addition, NELC are also working with schools to develop School Travel Plans to promote use of sustainable modes of travel by school age children (and their parents).

1.6 A permanent reduction to the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph will facilitate safer access / egress of vehicles using the new and existing accesses. It will also improve the safety of vulnerable road users, which is of particular importance given the perceived increase in the number of children and retirement dwelling occupants frequenting the area.

1.7 Local residents from Humberston Avenue which affront Humberston Avenue

within the section where the speed limit would be permanently changed, along with those side streets accessible via the affected section of the B1219, were notified of the intended speed limit change on 11 August 2020.

In total, 351 properties received a letter. Responses were received from five properties, all of which were supportive of the permanent speed reduction.

Three of the respondents stated they would like to see a Police presence and speed enforcement to reinforce the change. Two of the responses have suggested a scheme is considered for footway widening and the introduction of dedicated and protected cycle lane facility.

- 1.8 The move to a permanent 30mph speed limit is aligned with the Department for Transport Circular 01/2013 *Setting Local Speed Limits* which states that it is government policy to introduce 30mph speed limits within the environs of villages. As well as being the legal limit, speed limits are a key source of information to road users, particularly as an indicator of the nature and risks posed by that road both to themselves and to other road users.

The circular stresses that speed limits should be evidence led and seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel. As part of this process the use of both average (or mean) speed and 85%ile speed (the speed which 85% of vehicles travel at or below) is promoted. However, it is mean speeds that that traffic authorities are prompted to use as a basis for setting signed speed limits.

- 1.9 Roads suitable for 40mph speed limits are generally higher-quality suburban roads, or those on the outskirts of urban areas where there is little development. As development continues to materialise in the area it has led to the nature of the road becoming more of a typical urban residential road, thereby lending itself to a standard 30mph limit, as opposed to its current 40mph designation.
- 1.10 The permanent reduction to a 30mph speed limit is also needed to ensure compliance with guidelines issued by the Department for Transport for the installation of the new zebra crossing facilities.
- 1.11 Speed monitoring was conducted in March 2021 at three separate locations along Humberston Avenue, within the extent of the current temporary 30mph speed limit. The survey results are shown below:

	Speed Limit (mph)	Mean Speed (mph)	85%ile Speed (mph)	Daily average volume (vehicles)	ACPO offender rate* (%)
--	----------------------	------------------------	--------------------------	---------------------------------------	----------------------------------

#### **Humberston Avenue east of Humberston Country Club**

Two-Way	30 (Temp)	30.5	34.5	5,934	13.0
---------	-----------	------	------	-------	------

#### **Humberston Avenue between Hewitts Manor and Old Paddock Court**

Two-Way	30 (Temp)	29.7	34.0	6,741	11.1
---------	-----------	------	------	-------	------

#### **Humberston Avenue east of Grange Farm Lane**

Two-Way	30 (Temp)	30.1	34.0	7,961	11.2
---------	-----------	------	------	-------	------

*\*ACPO Offender Rate – The percentage of motorists travelling at a speed above the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) recommended enforcement threshold of 10%+2 i.e. for a 30mph, offenders are those travelling at speeds of 35mph and above.*

1.12 The results of these surveys indicate that a permanent 30mph speed limit is appropriate for Humberston Avenue and is likely to be accepted by drivers with the majority of traffic travelling at a level accepted for a 30mph speed limit.

1.13 A previous report was presented to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 seeking approval to progress with the introduction of a permanent 30mph speed limit. The report was deferred by the Portfolio Holder, at that meeting, to enable more current speed survey data to be collected. Data was collected in March 2021 as detailed in point 1.11 above.

## **2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **2.1 Should these proposals be adopted, the opportunities are:**

- Maintain a safe environment and enhance the safety of all road users along the B1219 Humberston Avenue.
- Reduce the potential risk of Personal Injury Collisions (PICs) occurring, particularly those of a serious or fatal nature. Many of the annual injuries and deaths that occur nationally happen within residential areas, where there is the greatest mix of vulnerable road users and motor vehicle traffic.
- Create an environment where society feels safer to undertake more healthy behaviours such as increased physical activity in the form of walking and cycling. This, of course provides a wider public health benefit.

## **2.2 Should these proposals not be adopted, the risks are:**

- Potential increase in the number of Personal Injury Collisions (PIC's) given the increased volume of motor vehicle vehicles and pedestrians using this area.
- Should the proposals not be approved it will place those pedestrians who use the formal pedestrian crossing points at increased risk of serious injury or worse should a collision occur.
- Vehicle speeds will increase to adhere to the higher speed limit and whilst the majority would likely travel at the posted speed limit of 40mph, there is a risk that vehicles may travel at a speed just below the ACPO recommended enforcement level of 46mph.

## **3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 3.1 Take no action in respect of making the 30mph speed limit permanent and allow the speed limit to revert back to a 40mph limit once the current TTRO expires. This would result in increased risks to all road users and would require the removal of a zebra crossing.
- 3.2 Introduce a 20mph speed limit in the vicinity of Humberston Academy. Following a collision between a pedestrian and a vehicle in March 2021, in the vicinity of the zebra crossing outside of Humberston Academy, a request was received to consider the introduction of 20mph speed limit in this location. If this option is to be considered further, it is likely that extensive speed reducing measures would be required to ensure this speed limit is self-enforcing.

## **4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 Speed limits are issues which can generate a number of conflicting opinions. For those reasons guidance issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) on setting local speed limits has been adopted by the Council as set out in Recommendation 12 of the Regeneration and Scrutiny Panel report on the findings of the Speed Limit/Road Safety Committee January – March 2013. This will avoid any allegation that unrealistic speed limits have been set.
- 4.2 It is expected there will be little potential for negative reputational implications for the Council resulting from the decision given that the proposed arrangement has already been in place for a substantial time period, under Temporary Traffic Regulations and evidence suggests that road users have already become accustomed to traveling at the reduced speed.
- 4.3 If approval is given to this proposal, the Order will be formally advertised in accordance with the statutory Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. Public notices will be published in the local press to advise of the Councils intention to make the Order. This provides a formal opportunity for anyone to object to the making of the order.

## **5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 5.1 Traffic Authorities have a duty to erect and maintain prescribed speed limit signs on their roads under Section 85 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act (RTRA) (1984) and in accordance with the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (2016).

The proposed recommendation delivers improved value for money, as there will be a reduction in signs along the affected stretch of road. Thereby, reducing the amount of street clutter i.e. speed limit repeater signs, traffic posts which would ordinarily be required as part of a 40mph limit.

- 5.2 The recommendation does not require any capital expenditure. Any standard lining, signing and public notices required are covered through the Council's Regeneration Partnership arrangement with ENGIE.

## **6. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The proposals are not expected to have any significant impact on climate change and / or the environment. There is the potential that the proposed speed limit reduction may result in few car journeys as residents feel safer to make shorter journeys by other means, whether this be cycling, walking or utilising local bus services.

- 6.2 Higher speed is often perceived to bring benefits in terms of shorter travel times for people and goods. However, evidence suggests that when traffic is travelling at constant speeds, even at a lower level, it may result in shorter and more reliable overall journey times, and that journey time savings from higher speed limits are often overestimated.

## **7. CONSULTATION WITH SCRUTINY**

There has been no consultation with Scrutiny in relation to this matter.

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications resulting from this report, as costs incurred are covered via the Engie contract.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Under Section 84 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 traffic authorities are empowered to make a Speed Order.
- 9.2 Regulation 8 makes provision for objections and regulation 14 allows the Council to modify an Order before it is made.

## **10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct HR implications contained within this report

## **11. WARD IMPLICATIONS**

The proposals relate to issues solely within the Humberston and New

Waltham Ward.

## **12. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

[Department for Transport Circular 01/2013: Setting Local Speed Limits](#)

[Local Authorities' Traffic Orders \(Procedure\) \(England and Wales\) Regulations 1996](#)

[Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984](#)

[The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 No 362](#)

[PHET 09/20/07: Traffic Regulation Order – Humberston Avenue: 30mph Speed Limit](#)

## **13. CONTACT OFFICER(S)**

Mark Nearney – Assistant Director of Housing, Highways and Transport – NELC. Telephone: (01472) 324122

Debbie Swatman – Traffic Team Manager – ENGIE  
Telephone: (01472) 324514

**COUNCILLOR STEWART SWINBURN**  
**PORTFOLIO HOLDER ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT**

## APPENDIX 1 – SPEED LIMIT SCHEDULE

### “Revocation - 40mph Speed Limit”

<b><u>ROAD</u></b>	<b><u>SIDE</u></b>	<b><u>EXTENT</u></b>
B1219 Humberston Avenue	Both	From a point 41 metres east of the eastern kerbline of Cannon Oakes Court to a point 182 metres west of its junction with the A1031.

APPENDIX 2 – SPEED LIMIT DRAWING

