
Meeting: Traffic Management Meeting
Date: 1st March 2011
Subject: To extend the existing 30mph speed limit and introduce a 40mph speed limit 'buffer' on Shefford Road, Clophill.
Report of: Basil Jackson
Summary: To report to the Portfolio Holder for Safer Communities and Healthier Lifestyles the results of a consultation on a proposed Traffic Regulation Order to extend the current 30mph speed limit and introduce a 40mph speed limit 'buffer' on Shefford Road, Clophill

Contact Officer: Caroline Almond
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Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: Clophill
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Financial:

The construction of this scheme will cost approximately £12,600. This comprises £10,000 from the Parish Council and the balance from road safety budgets available this financial year.

Legal:

None as part of this report

Risk Management:

None as part of this report

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None as part of this report

Equalities/Human Rights:

None as part of this report

Community Safety:

None as part of this report

Sustainability:

None as part of this report

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. That the proposal to extend the 30mph speed limit and introduce a 40mph speed limit 'buffer' on Shefford Road, Clophill be implemented as set out in this report.**

Background

1. Shefford Road, Clophill was assessed under the Department for Transport guidelines for applying the appropriate speed limit for the nature and environment of a road including assessment of speed data and accident history. This assessment was prompted by a local resident's request that was supported by the Parish Council. There was a locally held view that the existing speed limit was inappropriately positioned in relation to the properties and that the additional inclusion of a 40mph buffer zone would further improve the situation.

Whilst it was stated that this work would not be of a high priority for use of highway funds it was agreed that the site assessment and initial consultation was funded through the highways budget the Parish Council would fund the physical works as they considered it to be a high priority.

2. Speed data was taken at the start of the existing 30mph limit on Shefford Road, Clophill (outside the old waterworks) in June 2009. The speed data results show an average speed of 38.7mph on entering the 30mph speed limit and 36.6mph on leaving the village. This shows motorists are not currently adhering to the speed limit and slowing down accordingly at this location. The speed limit at present is positioned outside residential buildings which does not give the stopping distance needed if a vehicle was to exit/ enter the properties.
3. Following the speed limit assessment, Bedfordshire Highways recommended that a 30mph speed limit should be extended by 70m, to improve visibility and stopping distance to the first residential building (see Appendix A for plan). The introduction of a 40mph speed limit 'buffer' is also desirable to slow motorists entering the 30mph speed limit and to include accesses to 'The Clophill Centre' and a farm within the proposed 40mph speed limit.
4. The proposal was advertised during January 2011. Public notices were also erected on site and consultation letters sent to all stakeholders. Traffic Management Police had no objection to this proposal.
5. As a result of this consultation, two objection letters were received.
6. The objectors' main points can be summarised as follows:-
 - a) The speed limit should cover the Top Farm length of road (near bend, further east on Shefford Road).
 - b) The undesirable look of signage in the countryside.
 - c) Braking at the proposed speed limit locations will cause noise/ carbon pollution and break dust.

Conclusion and the Way Forward

7. In response to the objectors' comments:
- a) The proposed 40mph limit covers most of the scattered roadside development in Shefford Road. The Top Farm area is beyond that and has never been raised as a concern from either the Police or the local residents. If there is a speeding issue, an assessment and speed data collection would need to be done as a separate issue. The Parish Council are funding the current proposal following public concern. It would not be a priority of the Parish Council or local concern to extend the scheme to the Top Farm area at this time.
 - b) A decision was made by a Road Safety Engineer and a Traffic Management Police Officer on the ideal locations for the speed limit extents. The Parish Council and Traffic Police agree fully with the recommendation and of the signs and their locations. Road safety, rather than aesthetics, is seen as the main priority in this recommendation.
 - c) The implementation of the proposal is expected to reduce heavy braking by slowing motorist at a more gradual rate, particularly by use of the 40mph 'buffer' limit. The proposed 30mph signage will be extended, further away from a property and the 40mph signage will also not be located directly outside a property.
8. In summary, it is felt that the advertised restrictions are appropriate for the circumstances, and it is recommended that the proposal be approved for implementation as advertised.

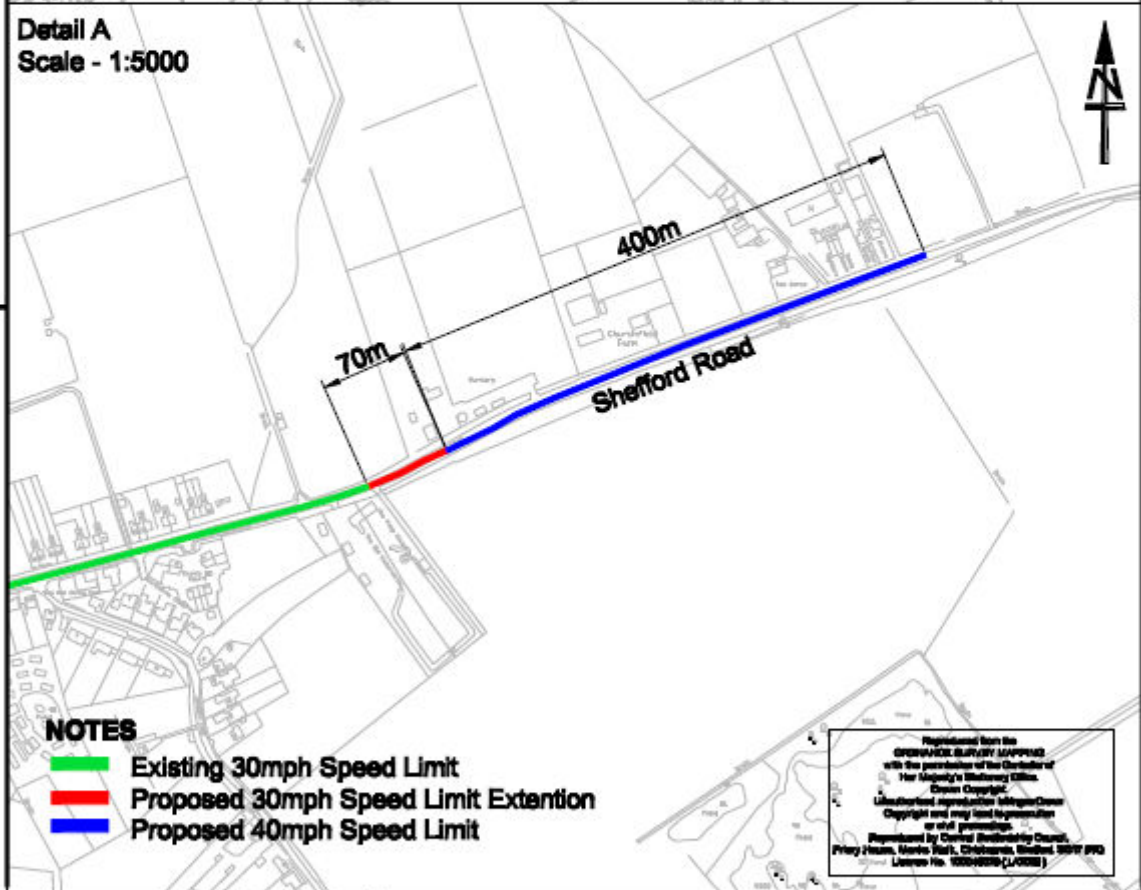
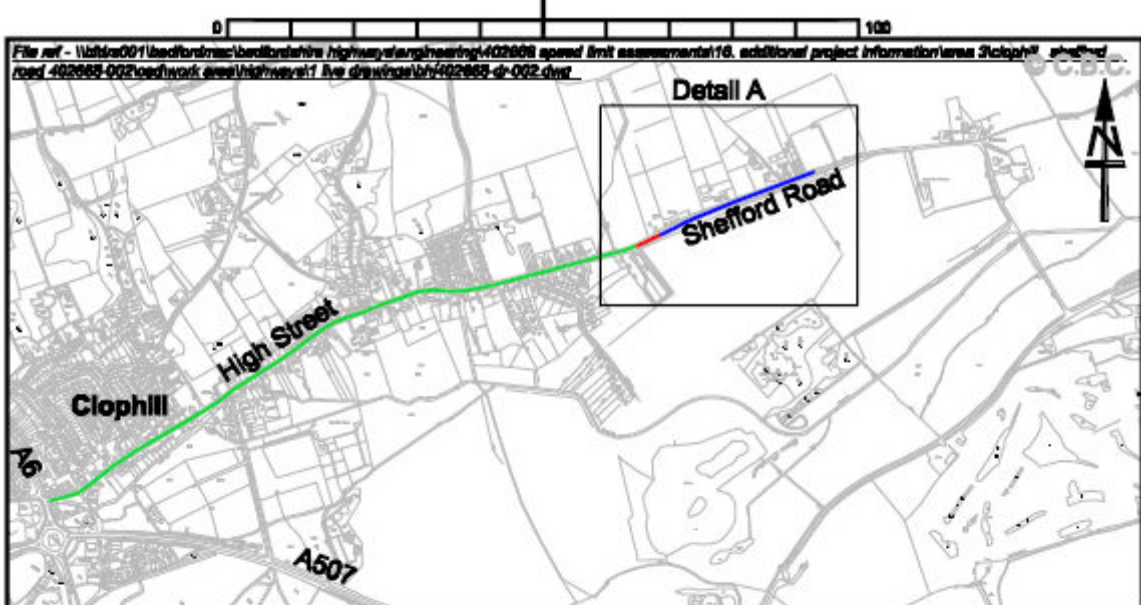
Appendices:



Appendix A: Location Plan

Appendix B: Public Notice

Appendix C: Objections to proposal

APPENDIX A



Project Name Shefford Road, Clophill				 	
Drawing Title Public Notice Plan Proposed Speed Limit Extents					
Rev	Revision details	Chkd	Appd	Date	Client
Drawn: CA	Preliminary				
Design: CA	For comment				Drawing No 402668/TRO/002
Chkd: GB	For tender				
Appd: NC	For construction				Rev -
Date: 28/12/2010	As constructed				
Original Drawing Size : A4				Scale : As Shown Dimensions : -	



PUBLIC NOTICE

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL PROPOSES TO EXTEND THE 30MPH SPEED LIMIT AND INTRODUCE A 40MPH SPEED LIMIT ON SHEFFORD ROAD, CLOPHILL

Reason for the proposal: The proposed Order is considered necessary on the grounds of promoting road safety. The proposed extension of the 30mph speed limit and the introduction of a 40mph speed limit are specifically aimed at reducing vehicle speeds on Shefford Road and High Street, Clophill, where pedestrian activity and road safety has been identified by the community as an issue.

Therefore, Central Bedfordshire Council proposes to make a Speed Limit Order as follows:

Effect of the Order:

To extend the 30mph speed limit on the following length of Shefford Road:

That Length of Shefford Road, Clophill which extends from the existing 30mph speed limit in an easterly direction for approx 70 metres.

To introduce a 40mph speed limit on the following length of Shefford Road

That length of Shefford Road, Clophill which extends approximately 60m north of the northern property boundary of 'The Pump House' in an easterly direction for approximately 400 metres.

Order to be revoked: If implemented the previous speed limits on the above lengths of road will be revoked.

Further Details: of the proposed Order, a plan and a statement of reasons for proposing to make the Order may be examined during normal opening hours at Ampthill Library, 1 Dunstable Street, MK45 2NL and Shefford Library, 1 High Street, SG17 SDD. These details will be placed on deposit until 6 weeks after the Order is made or until it is decided not to continue with the proposal. Telephone Caroline Almond on 0845 365 6057 for further information on this proposal.

Objections: should be sent in writing to the Transportation Manager, Bedfordshire Highways, Woodlands Annexe, Manton Lane, Bedford, MK41 7NU, or email centralbedsconsultation@amey.co.uk, stating the grounds on which they are made by 31st January 2011.

Order Title: if made will be "Central Bedfordshire Council (30mph and 40mph Speed Limits) (Shefford Road, Clophill) Order 201**"

Technology House
239 Ampthill Road
Bedford MK42 9QQ

Basil Jackson
Assistant Director for Highways

6th January 2011

APPENDIX C

Objection Letter 1

I wish to object to new speed limit signs due to be installed at Shefford Road, Clophill. If they are a very expensive necessity it would be far more beneficial to be placed nearer Top Farm just after the hump back bridges. This is where you will find the drivers commence speeding and would have more of an impact. There is a large expanse of empty road that could be used for these signs if they REALLY need to be placed without being put right outside residential areas. Not only does this spoil the countryside but in my opinion will not benefit anyone if the council insist on placing them on this stretch. Having lived on this road for 26 years I can assure you excessive speeding is an occasional occurrence. The rat run it used to be has now diminished as drivers are forced to slow down when they enter the village of Clophill due to the parked cars throughout the High Street. The majority therefore tend to take the top road. Surely this money could be spent more wisely and efficiently!

Objection Letter 2

Dear Sir/Madam,

In response to the proposed speed limit restriction along this road. I object to the waste of money and the 3 major points are:

A - There are far too many signs already in Bedfordshire and along the Shefford Rd which are unnecessary.

B - The most dangerous part of the highway is in fact the portion that is proposed as unrestricted.

C - Why put the signs outside the dwelling which will increase the NOISE POLLUTION, CARBON POLLUTION and BRAKE DUST.

Expansion of above

Ref A - All Bedfordshire roads would benefit from surfaces reconditioning as a higher priority investment. Not road furniture or signage.

Ref B - Drive from the A507 in the westerly direction towards Clophill and the highway naturally lends itself to speed restriction until exiting the left hand bend at Top Farm. This is the most dangerous part - exactly where you are NOT suggesting. This small portion of 60mph is a strange illogical idea. Drive the route and see for yourself. If you insist on going ahead with this, why not start the restriction at the A507 junction and continue it until the mandatory 30 mph as you approach the village, with this the unsightly signs would be out of view for all dwellings plus items B and C would be satisfied?

Ref C - Vehicle acceleration and braking when approaching and departing.

There appears to be no logic to the idea. I have lived here for over 25 years have only witnessed excessive speed on occasions. The village is the problem not here along Shefford Road.

Please don't waste the council money.

Thank you