
Meeting: Traffic Management Meeting
Date: 25th January 2012
Subject: North-west and South-west Areas of Dunstable - Consider Responses to Proposed 20mph Speed Limit Zones

Report of: Basil Jackson

Summary: This report seeks the approval of the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services for the introduction of 20mph speed limit zones in the North-west and South-west areas of Dunstable following the publication of proposals.

Contact Officer: Steve Hall
steve.hall@amey.co.uk

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: Dunstable Central, Dunstable Northfields and Dunstable Watling

Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The proposal will improve road safety and promote cycling and walking.

Financial:

The cost of introducing a 20mph speed limit zone covering both of these areas will be approximately £40,000

Legal:

None from this report

Risk Management:

None from this report

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None from this report

Equalities/Human Rights:

None from this report

Community Safety:

The proposal will reduce speed and improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians as well as amenity for all residents in the area.

Sustainability:

Implementation of this scheme may encourage people to walk or cycle instead of using less sustainable forms of transport.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the proposal to introduce 20mph Speed Limit Zones in both the North-west and South-west areas of Dunstable be implemented as advertised.

Background and Information

1. Central Bedfordshire Council wishes to introduce 20mph speed limit zones in all of Dunstable's residential areas. The current scheme represents phases 1 and 2 in this process and it is intended that the remainder will follow in subsequent financial years.
2. It is to be stressed that the creation of 20mph speed limited areas or zones within the residential areas of Dunstable was highlighted by elected members at the Local Area Transport Plan 3 consultation meetings as the highest priority alongside measures to tackle the rat running traffic through the area. These were thus included within the plan for Dunstable and adopted by the Council following the Local Area Transport Plan consultation process.

The Local Area Transport Plan for Dunstable is to be delivered over three years and in this initial year the proposal for the first two phases of the 20mph zone is being brought forward together with proposals for the Lowther Road, Langdale Road, Meadway route treatment dealt with elsewhere.

This action is considered to be a key component of tackling speeding and rat running through the residential areas of Dunstable in the interim period until the M1-A5 link road can be constructed to relieve the pressure of through traffic. This is still some years away.
3. In proposing to introduce 20mph speed limits into these two areas it is accepted that compliance will vary from the minor residential streets where speeds will already be that low to the main routes through where driver behaviour is less likely to be sufficiently modified for full compliance.
4. The existing speed limit in these areas is 30mph. A speed and volume survey was undertaken on the main roads through the South-west area to determine actual vehicle speeds. Speeds were not measured on Brewers Hill Road/Drovers Way as this area had not originally been included in this phase of the works but there is no reason to believe that the speeds measured on the other roads are not indicative. Speed has always been considered an issue in the area. The results from the automatic traffic counters indicate that in general speeds are not excessively high in terms of the posted speed limit and it is more about the appropriateness of the speed to the nature of the area. (Speed summaries are included as Appendix G.)

5. Whilst none of the speeds measured give significant cause for concern in respect of either mean average speed or 85th %ile speed there are clearly a number of vehicles that do exceed the prosecutable limit. The remainder are general compliant with the existing 30mph limit but in densely populated areas there is an increasing view that 30mph is too high a limit and there is now an increasing number of local authorities that are implementing residential area 20mph zones and limits. The introduction of a 20mph speed limit across the entire area will send a clear message to drivers that this is a residential area and whilst they are welcome there they should reduce their speed for the benefit of residents.
6. In general the posting of reduced speed limits on its own has been shown to only have a limited effect on driver behaviour with typically only a one or two mph reduction in speeds. In the case of western Dunstable however the main routes through the area will also receive some targeted traffic calming and traffic management features that will further reduce speeds at the more sensitive locations such as junctions, near schools and key crossing points.
It is considered that this through route is likely to be the one where excess speed will be an issue with speeds in the smaller residential streets already close to or at acceptable limits.
7. Whilst this is not a guarantee that the overall route speed will be reduced to 20mph it will reinforce the message. Revised DfT guidance on 20mph zones has also recently reduced the requirement for the number and type of physical features required to reinforce 20mph zones allowing instead the greater use of road markings and less invasive features to support the lower speed limit.
8. Both of the proposed 20mph speed limit zones were formally advertised by public notice in November 2011. Consultations were carried out with the emergency services and other statutory bodies, Dunstable Town Council and Elected Members. Public notices were also posted on-street.

Consultation results

9. A total of 14 representations have been received, 10 of which are opposed to the advertised proposals. Copies of all representations are included in Appendix E and the comments are summarised below. In addition, Bedfordshire Police and the Highways Agency have provided formal responses (see paragraphs 11. and 12.)
10. The main points raised by those objecting to the proposed 20mph speed limit are as follows:-
 - a) Some respondents suggest that the 20mph zones should exclude through-routes, such as Brewers Hill Road and Drivers Way, whereas others ask why a road such as West Street is not included.
 - b) It will lead to even more congestion on Dunstable's busier roads.

- c) It is questionable whether they will reduce actual vehicle speeds, so it is doubtful whether the 20mph speed limits would promote road safety.
- d) Speeds in many of the side streets are already below 20mph, so it will not achieve anything.
- e) Drivers will get frustrated at having to travel at unrealistically low speeds and will overtake.
- f) There is little prospect of any Police enforcement.
- g) The proposal will not improve the quality of the environment. It will not promote walking and cycling, mainly because the gradients in the area are too steep.
- h) Some respondents would prefer 20mph speed limits to be confined to the areas outside schools, possibly only in force at the start and end of the school day.
- i) Funding could be better spent on other Council services, notably on highways maintenance work, rather than new schemes.
- j) There was insufficient publicity of the proposals.

11. Bedfordshire Police has considered the proposals and their response is included in Appendix F. Their comments are as follows:-

Without appropriate road engineering on the main through roads this authority will not support this scheme. At present we have live speeding issues concerning the 30 mph limits within this proposed scheme, it is clear that if the motorist is flaunting the 30mph limit then a 20 mph limit without engineering will not change their attitudes and only increase complaints and demands on the Police.

12. The Highways Agency who are the highway authority for the A5 trunk road through Dunstable were consulted and their response is as follows:-

I can confirm that the Highways Agency has no objection to the making of the proposed Orders.

However, although this may not be particularly significant, we would be interested to know what assessment (if any) your authority has made to look at the impact on the A5 of traffic avoiding the 20mph zones when they are in place. More importantly, we would like your assurance that when you come to sign the new speed limits off the side roads at/near the junction with the A5 trunk road, we will be consulted well in advance. To elaborate on this, we would clearly need to be consulted where signs/posts are required to be erected on trunk road land, but also for other signs adjacent to the A5, where there may be visibility issues that need to be addressed.

If Central Beds Highways do need to access the A5 for signing purposes, we may also need to look at setting up a Section 6 agreement with your authority, but this could be something we could discuss through one of our regular liaison meetings with the Council.

I hope that by putting these concerns in writing at this stage, we will ensure your future signing plans are accommodated to both authorities satisfaction.

Responses and Conclusion

13. Bedfordshire Highways' response to the specific points listed above are as follows:-
- a) 20mph zones normally cover a clearly defined area, which is the case in both the North-west and South-west zones. Whilst roads such as Brewers Hill Road and Drivers Way carry some through-traffic they are still primarily residential in nature. In addition, taking certain roads out of the zone would lead to driver confusion as a result of more speed limit changes. It would also mean that many more signs would be needed, which would be costly and visually intrusive. West Street is one of Dunstable's main through-routes and is identified as such on direction signs. It is felt that a 30mph limit is more appropriate on roads of that type. These routes also help to split Dunstable's residential areas into manageable 20mph zones, rather than having a blanket 20mph limit covering the entire town.
 - b) It is felt that the introduction 20mph zones without extensive physical measures will not result in a significant shift of traffic from the side roads to the major routes, such as the A5, and hence should not lead to noticeably more congestion.
 - c) Research suggests that 20mph limits are successful in reducing actual vehicle speeds, albeit with varying degrees of success. If a reasonable proportion of drivers adhere to the 20mph limit, then it should improve road safety. We would expect lower vehicle speeds to reduce the number of collisions and should reduce the severity of any collisions that do occur.
 - d) It is true that vehicle speeds in some streets are already below 20mph. However, speeds in other roads are higher and it is hoped that a statutory limit will help reduce those to acceptable levels. In many respects it is desirable if speeds are already in the region of 20-25mph as that suggests that any new limit will be seen by drivers as reasonable and would be relatively self-enforcing.
 - e) In most cases it is unlikely that drivers will overtake, particularly in residential streets where there is obvious danger in such behaviour.
 - f) It is accepted that the Police are unlikely to carry out regular enforcement because Government advice is that 20mph limits should be self-enforcing and not place a heavy burden on the Police.
 - g) Any environmental improvements would be difficult to quantify. However, it is hoped that if drivers can be encouraged to travel at reduced speeds it will reduce the dominance of the motor vehicle and the roads will be more welcoming to pedestrians and cyclists.

- h) There are a number of examples across Central Bedfordshire where 20mph limits have been introduced outside schools and these work reasonably well. However, there is a trend towards using 20mph zones on a more widespread basis, particularly in larger urban areas, and this is being positively encouraged by central Government.
- i) The Council allocates significant funding to maintaining its roads, but it also has a legal and moral responsibility to promote road safety. The introduction of 20mph speed limits is relatively inexpensive compared to physical traffic restraint measures and is seen as a cost-effective way of making roads safer.
- j) The proposed speed limits were advertised in the Luton and Dunstable Express and also on street notices in the area. Elected Members and the Town Council were also consulted. Letters were not sent to individual households, primarily due to the very high numbers of properties involved. The number of representations received represents a very small proportion of the population of these parts of Dunstable.

14. Bedfordshire Highways' response to the comments raised by Bedfordshire Police is as follow:-

A decision was made by Central Bedfordshire Councillors not to implement schemes involving large numbers of road engineering features. Some physical traffic restraint features will be provided at selected locations, particularly where vehicle speeds are currently high. However, these measures will be targeted at specific locations and will not be extensive. It is anticipated, based on experience, that the introduction of a 20mph limit together with road markings and regular repeater signs will lower the traffic speed by a few mph. It is accepted that some roads in the zones do not naturally lend themselves to speeds below 20mph. If the 20mph zones are implemented their effects will be monitored and additional physical measures considered, if necessary.

15. Bedfordshire Highways' response to the comments raised by the Highways Agency is as follow:-

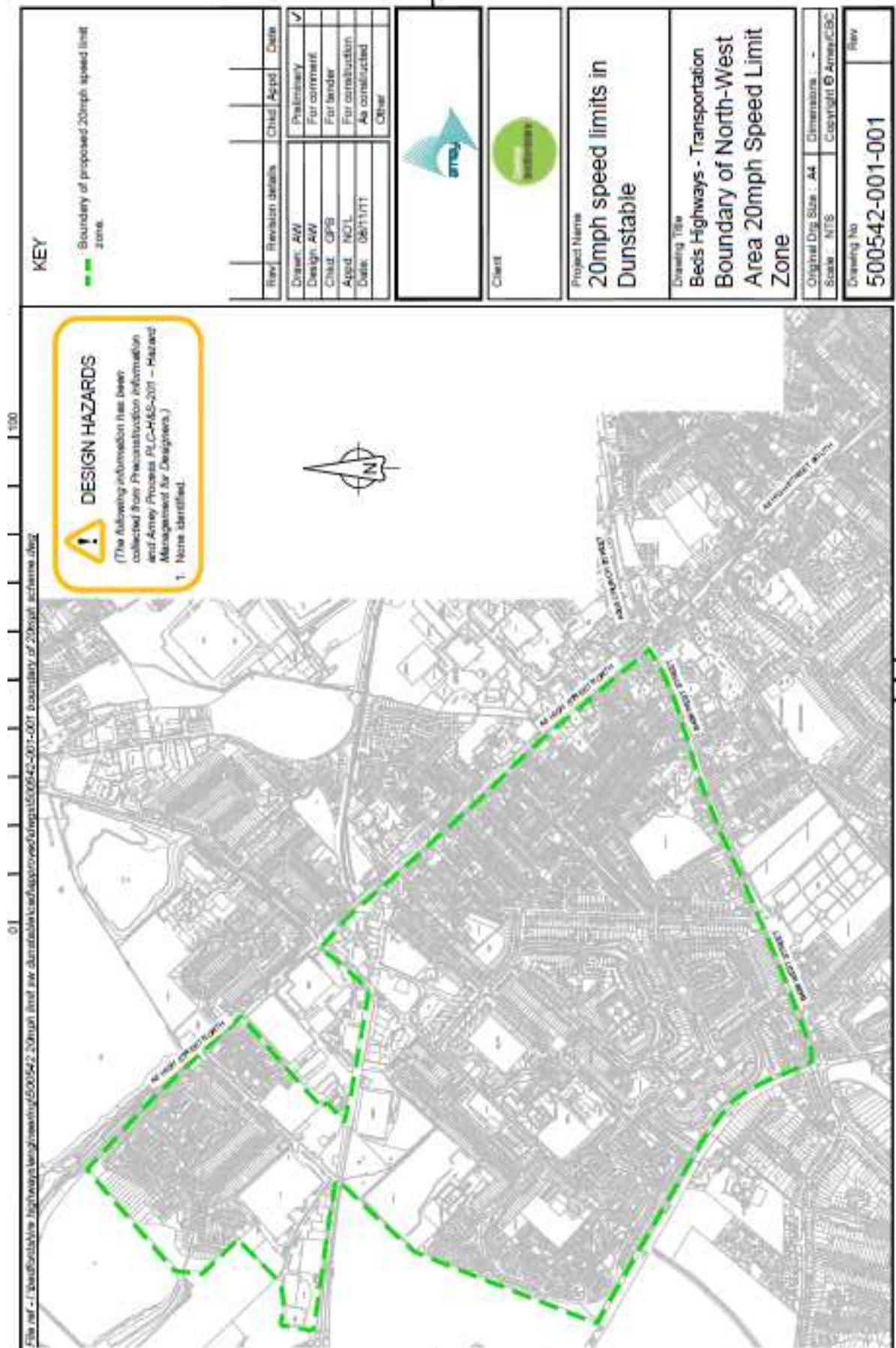
A detailed assessment of the impact of the 20mph speed limits on traffic on the A5 has not been made, but this is expected to be insignificant. If the 20mph zones are introduced, Bedfordshire Highways will liaise fully with the Agency on the location of the required traffic signs and ensure that the works are carried out to their satisfaction.

16. In conclusion, it is considered that the proposed 20mph speed limit zones together with some targeted traffic calming features will reduce speeds and bring road safety benefits. Lower speeds will improve the local environment and promote walking and cycling. Therefore, it is recommended that the scheme be approved for implementation as advertised.

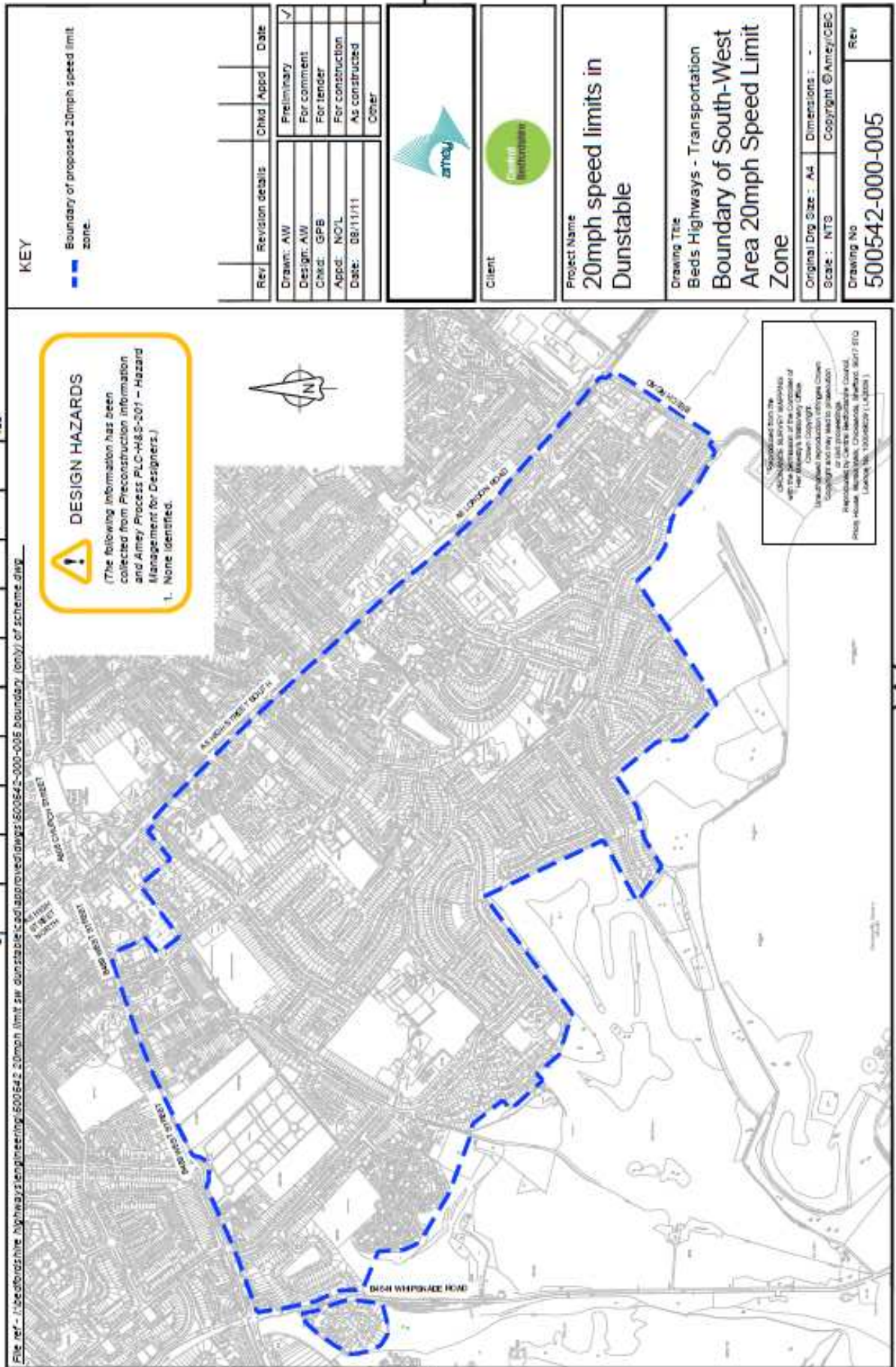
Appendices:

- Appendix A – Plan of 20mph zone for North-west area of Dunstable
- Appendix B – Plan of 20mph zone for South-west area of Dunstable
- Appendix C – Public Notice for North-west area of Dunstable
- Appendix D – Public Notice for South-west area of Dunstable
- Appendix E – Representations
- Appendix F – Bedfordshire Police response
- Appendix G – Highways Agency response
- Appendix H – Speed Summary

Appendix A



Appendix B





PUBLIC NOTICE

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL PROPOSES TO INTRODUCE A 20MPH SPEED LIMIT ZONE ON VARIOUS ROADS IN NORTH-WEST DUNSTABLE

Reason for proposal: The proposed Order is considered necessary on the grounds of promoting road safety. The proposed 20mph Speed Limit is intended to reduce the speed of vehicles in this residential area and improve safety for all road users. This will also improve the quality of the environment and will help promote walking and cycling. Therefore, Central Bedfordshire Council proposes to make a Road Traffic Regulation as follows:-

Effect of the Order

To introduce a 20mph Speed Limit Zone on the following roads in Dunstable:-

- Aidans Close
- Albion Street
- Aldbanks
- Ashcroft
- Aynscombe Close
- Barley Brow
- Barrie Avenue
- Beale Street
- Beech Green
- Beechwood Court
- Beecroft Way
- Benning Avenue
- Brewers Hill Road
- Brook Close
- Bryony Way
- Bunhill Way
- Champion Close
- Chadwick Close
- Cheyne Close
- Chiltern Road
- Clifton Road
- Cookfield Close
- Creasey Park Drive
- Croft Green
- Cross Street North
- Cusworth Way
- Delco Way
- Drovers Way
- Edward Street
- Eleanors Cross
- England Avenue
- Franklin Road
- French's Avenue
- French's Gate
- Greenfield Close
- Hambling Way
- Hillcroft
- Ivy Close
- Leighton Court
- Loring Road
- Maidenbower Avenue
- Mathew Street
- Norman Way
- North Station Way
- Nursery Close
- Orchid Close
- Palma Close
- Pascomb Road
- Peppercorn Way
- Princes Street
- Radburn Court
- Ravenscourt
- Redfield Close
- Regent Street
- Rotherwood Close
- Sandland Close
- Salters Way
- Saxon Close
- Scawsby Close
- Spinney Crescent
- Stuart Street
- Sunbower Avenue
- Suncote Avenue
- Suncote Close
- Union Street
- Victoria Street
- Waterlow Road
- Weatherby
- West Parade
- Westfield Road
- Winfield Street
- Worthington Road

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 Dunstable Library, Vernon Place, Dunstable, LU5 4HA. 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. Please contact Gary Baldwin on 0845 3656116 or e-mail gary.baldwin@amey.co.uk for further advice on this proposal.

Objections should be sent in writing to the Transportation Manager, Bedfordshire Highways, Woodlands Annex, Manton Lane, Bedford MK41 7NU or by e-mail to centralbedsconsultation@amey.co.uk stating the grounds on which they are made by 2nd December 2011.

Order Title: If made will be "Central Bedfordshire Council (20mph Speed Limit Zone) (Various Roads in North-West Dunstable) Order 201**"

Technology House
239 Ampthill Road
Bedford MK42 9QQ

Basil Jackson
Assistant Director for Highways

9th November 2011

PUBLIC NOTICE

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL PROPOSES TO INTRODUCE A 20MPH SPEED LIMIT ZONE ON VARIOUS ROADS IN SOUTH-WEST DUNSTABLE

Reason for proposal: The proposed Order is considered necessary on the grounds of promoting road safety. The proposed 20mph Speed Limit is intended to reduce the speed of vehicles in this residential area and improve safety for all road users. This will also improve the quality of the environment and will help promote walking and cycling. Therefore, Central Bedfordshire Council proposes to make a Road Traffic Regulation as follows:-

Effect of the Order

To introduce a 20mph Speed Limit Zone on the following roads in Dunstable:-

- Abbey Mews
- Appleby Gardens
- Ardley Close
- Beech Road (from A5 London Road to 21 metres south-west of Lowther Road)
- Bennetts Close
- Bibshall Crescent
- Birchside
- Borrowdale Avenue
- Bowland Crescent
- Bowmans Close
- Bowmans Way
- Brampton Rise
- Brierley Close
- Bull Pond Lane
- Burges Close
- Burr Street
- Buttercup Close
- Buttermere Avenue
- Candale Close
- Canesworde Road
- Carlisle Close
- Cartmel Drive
- Catchacre
- Cemetery Lane
- Churchill Road
- Crosby Close
- Derwent Drive
- Easedale Close
- Ennerdale Avenue
- First Avenue
- Fox Dells
- Friars Walk
- Friary Field
- Furness Avenue
- Furzen Close
- Garden Road
- Garrett Close
- Gilded Acre
- Graphic Close
- Grasmere Close
- Grovebury Close
- Hawthorn Close
- Hillyfields
- Hilton Avenue
- Hurlock Close
- Icknield Street
- Index Drive
- Keswick Close
- Kirby Road
- Kirkstone Drive
- Knotts Close
- Langdale Close
- Langdale Road
- Leston Close
- Lockhart Close
- London Road service road adjacent to nos. 126-130 London Road
- London Road service road adjacent to nos. 142-154 London Road
- London Road service road adjacent to nos. 156-192 London Road
- Long Meadow
- Lowther Road
- Mardale Avenue
- Maundsey Close
- Meadway
- Mentmore Crescent
- Miletree Crescent
- Morland Close
- Oldhill
- Osborne Road
- Patterdale Close
- Penrith Avenue
- Periwinkle Lane
- Pipers Croft
- Regency Court
- Royal Walk
- Royce Close
- Seamons Close
- Southfields Road
- Spoodell
- Staines Square
- Staveley Road
- Stipers Close
- Tarnside Close
- The Cedars
- The Cheveralls
- Tibbett Close
- Turnpike Close
- Ullswater Road
- Ulverston Road
- Valence End
- Wayside
- Westdown Gardens
- West Hill
- Willoughby Close
- Windemere Close
- Woolpack Close

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 Dunstable Library, Vernon Place, Dunstable, LU5 4HA. 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. Please contact Gary Baldwin on 0845 3656116 or e-mail gary.baldwin@amey.co.uk for further advice on this proposal.

Objections should be sent in writing to the Transportation Manager, Bedfordshire Highways, Woodlands Annex, Manton Lane, Bedford MK41 7NU or by e-mail to centralbedsconsultation@amey.co.uk stating the grounds on which they are made by 2nd December 2011.

Order Title: If made will be "Central Bedfordshire Council (20mph Speed Limit Zone) (Various Roads in South-West Dunstable) Order 2011"

Technology House
239 Amphill Road
Bedford MK42 9QQ

Basil Jackson
Assistant Director for Highways

9th November 2011

Appendix E

Dear Sir,

I wish to comment on the proposed 20mph speed limit to be imposed on roads in north-west Dunstable.

While I support the imposition of this limit on most of the roads in the area I object to the inclusion of Brewers Hill Road and Drovers Way. These roads form an important 'through' route for traffic wishing to avoid the congested centre of town and I believe it remains important to expedite the flow of traffic through this artery as efficiently as possible. There are no schools facing directly onto either road, safe crossings are already installed, and I fear that slowing this traffic further will simply increase congestion which is already at intolerable levels.

Can I suggest that other areas of road safety should also be a priority in this project, such as:

- a). Tackling the long-standing problem of unlicensed motor-cycle users in the area (who already routinely flout the existing speed limit).
- b). Addressing the problem of motorists driving the 'wrong' way along one-way streets near to the town centre.
- c). Reducing the numbers of Goods Vehicles ignoring the existing 7.5 ton weight limit covering the area and ensuring that no Goods Vehicles exceeding 3.5 tons are parked in the area overnight.

Many thanks,

Dear Sir,

I object to the existing 'blanket' proposal. - Although it might be good, in the interests of safety, to consider 20mph speed restriction on roads adjacent to schools; and also on certain more major roads: eg Drovers Way, Chiltern Road, Langdale Road, etc - but why is West Street **not** included in this scheme? Is this main road not worthy of similar safety considerations?

The existing proposal raises other questions:-

- How can such a scheme be effectively policed?
- Would not the cost of the scheme be better invested in road maintenance? The condition of many of these local roads warrants repair works.

Many of our roads are also in dire need of 'white lining', to make good that which has been eroded through wear and tear.

- Before embarking on any new local road scheme could attention be directed toward the removal of redundant road signs - eg signs 'new road layout ahead' has now been around for over one year!

I would also comment that this proposal seems to have been very limited in regard to the number of advertising notices attached to lamp-posts.

In my locality I have only seen one such notice. Should there not be at least one notice 'posted' for each affected road?

I look forward to your reply.

To Whom It May Concern:

PROPOSAL TO INTRODUCE A 20MPH SPEED LIMIT ZONE ON VARIOUS ROADS IN NORTH-WEST DUNSTABLE

Thank you for giving the public a chance to comment on the above. However, I do not think this has been advertised very well. If this has been reported in the local press we certainly haven't seen it although we take the Dunstable Gazette every week. I saw a notice on a lamppost by chance in the last day or two when posting a letter in the local postbox, these notices aren't that good because the majority of people would not even see them never mind read them, but maybe that was a cunning plan.

Reason for proposal and my comments

1) **"Promoting/improving road safety"**

I don't think you can say that it will improve road safety, it is certainly not guaranteed.

You will see from my details below that I live in Salters Way, and have done for 30 years. My wife and I are of the opinion that in all that time this estate has never had a problem with road safety and currently does not, so why do you feel the need to change something that works very well.

As regards the rest of NW Dunstable, I would be interested to know how many pedestrians have been involved in RTA's in the last 12 months. I would imagine the figure to be very low, and again if that is the case then there really is no need to change, a lower speed limit does not necessarily reduce the number of accidents.

2) **"Also improve the quality of the environment"**

Do you really think so? This modern view (environment/climate change/etc) had to creep in somewhere. No comment.

3) **"Help promote walking"**

I disagree. We have an excellent network of footpaths, and I believe anyone that is interested in walking is already doing so.

4) **"Help promote cycling"**

I disagree. Again similar comment to point 3, people that are interested in cycling are already doing it. Are you really expecting hundreds more cyclists taking to the roads if you reduce the speed limit. Get real.

5) **"Provide a safer environment for school children and their carers"**

You maybe surprised to read that I agree with you on this one but only partly. The report mentions four schools in this area and I believe there should be a 20mph limit at these schools, but only for about 400 metres either side of the school entrance, not the whole of Dunstable (SW included).

One of the main dangers in these areas happens to be the way the mums drive and how they park their vehicles anywhere/anyhow when they are dropping off and collecting the children.

6) **“Vehicle speeds are already below 30mph”**

OK, it works so leave things as they are.

We have heard through various forms of media that the government is ‘proposing’ to increase the speed limit on motorways to 80mph. The reason given for this is, if you can believe it, to enable business people to get from A to B quicker and therefore carry out their duties more efficiently which could help boost the economy (or words to that effect). So what are you are planning to do? ... just the opposite by slowing down all delivery vehicles, public transport, everybody of course.

20mph on decent roads is too slow, and there is always a danger that motorists could get frustrated by being held up which could then lead to some driving irresponsibly and causing more problems. Have a restriction outside schools, but not everywhere.

I/we believe your proposal is way, way over the top and would be a waste of public funds. The surface of some of the roads in this region would shame a third world country, so the money would be better spent on uplifting those roads to a condition that you would expect in the UK in the 21st century.

I apologise for this email reaching you so close to the deadline, but as I explained at the start I don’t think this was well advertised.

Dear Sirs

I am writing to express concern about the proposal to introduce a blanket 20 mph zone through Dunstable. I appreciate the need to consider road safety issues and would like to make the following comments.

By the nature of modern behaviour and the amount of traffic you will not have the situation of children trying to play in the more major routes through the residential areas. In the side roads prevailing conditions such as parked cars mean that it is impossible to achieve 30 mph so introducing a 20 mph limit is a waste of effort. The more major routes are generally used by buses, and traffic needs to be kept moving at a reasonable speed. The main problem with speed of traffic is that the existing 30 mph limit is exceeded, so that should be enforced more rigourously. Whilst there are several fixed speed cameras these only have a very localised effect on speed. Changing to 20 mph would I believe only be achievable in the vicinity of the cameras. There is merit in trying to reduce speeds around schools but only at peak times in the mornings and afternoons on school days. There is no point in a 20 mph limit if the road is empty at weekends or school holidays. I believe some schools in Luton have variable speed zones around them that do only come into effect for say 08:00 to 09:00 and 15:00 to 16:00. My understanding is that a localised limit of this nature is more likely to be obeyed as it is there for an obvious reason, rather than having a blanket reduction that is pointless most of the time.

In summary I must therefore say that I am against the proposal as it stands, and feel that the existing 30 mph limit is acceptable.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Having read the list of proposed 20mph speed limits I am at a loss to know why this has been made.

How has this list been drawn up? Many of the roads listed are not dangerous, my own is Royce Close, I have lived here for over 16 years and have no knowledge of any incident.

Sundown Avenue is a notorious rat run where there has been a number of fatalities yet it is not on the list. This makes the whole scheme nonsensical and smacks of political window dressing.

I feel this measure is merely a local political matter, and that there is very little evidence that these measures would lead to any reduction in accidents, only in slower journey times and increased driver frustration.

The Dunstable town centre and it's surrounding roads are clogged allready and this plan will spread the congestion to an even wider area as the traffic will take longer to disperse.

I ask again on what statistics have these roads been chosen?

Road safety is important but this idea has to be based on good statistical analysis or it is useless and at best guesswork. This is an ill judged and ill thought out scheme by people who probably don't even live in the town, or if they do know nothing about it.

In closing I would like to stress again my objection to this very ill thought out scheme.

Dear Sirs and Annie Sparrow,

Is this yet another waste of local ratepayers money in these austere times. We do not need to waste money on a scheme where no problem exists, if speeding beyond 30 mph is a problem then this limit needs to be enforced. We have just recently added the 34 bus route in this area (thankyou Ann for sorting this problem) to restrict the speed limit will add to journey times reducing the number of buses available.

The plan to encourage walking and cycling in this area is another one of those suggestions put by the green lobby that is not practical. I currently am a very fit person and using my cycle in Lowther Road is like going for my workout at DW's gym, okay down hill but heart stopping up hill. Let those proposing this stupid idea ride a bike locally and I think we will see more people in the L & D. Reducing the speed limit to 20mph will also lead to more pollution from vehicle exhausts.

It seems that people who work for the council like to spend money when there is no balancing revenue. Spending on new signs will not cost effective, people will still speed.

Recently Bowmans Close has been resurfaced but where it meets Periwinkle Lane no seal has been placed between the new and old tarmac, one cold winter and the potholes will return. Who supervises these contracts?

20mph Proposal for South-West Dunstable

I view with great concern the proposal to introduce a 20mph speed limit within the designated South West Area of Dunstable. Where the roads are narrow with parked cars it is rarely possible to drive above 20mph anyway, so putting up speed signs would be a complete waste of money. Where the roads are wider and form important routes into and across the area e.g. Meadway and Langdale Road, then a 20mph limit would have a real detrimental effect on the flow of traffic, and the reduction in speed and resulting bunching would itself cause more of a problem. However these roads would be suitable for 'alongside' cycle lanes. The only exception I would suggest that would be acceptable is to put a 20mph limit where the road is immediately beside a school. But in these times of cut backs I see the whole thing as a complete waste of money, and I would urge you to drop the proposal and save the money.

20mph speed limit proposal in the North-West Dunstable

I view with great concern the proposal to introduce a 20mph speed limit within the designated North West Area of Dunstable. Where the roads are narrow with parked cars it is rarely possible to drive above 20mph anyway, so putting up speed signs would be a complete waste of money. Where the roads are wider and form important routes into and across the area e.g. Chiltern Road, Drovers Way, Brewers Hill Road and Frenchs Avenue, then a 20mph limit would have a real detrimental effect on the flow of traffic, and the reduction in speed and resulting bunching would itself cause more of a problem. These wider roads would however be suitable for having 'alongside' cycle lanes. The only exception I would suggest that would be acceptable is to put a 20mph limit where the road is immediately beside a school. But in these times of cut backs I see the whole thing as a complete waste of money, and I would urge you to drop the proposal and save the money.

Subject: Speed limits in south-west Dunstable. Consultation Transportation Manager at Bedfordshire Highways,

Whilst I appreciate the importance of road safety, I think there could be some unforeseen consequences in the reduction of the speed limit.

First is that driving at 20mph in third gear will cause more pollution than driving at 30mph in fourth gear.

Secondly. It will encourage frustrated drivers to overtake motorists keeping to the 20mph speed limit.

Thirdly, Most people keep roughly to the 30mph speed limit apart from a few boy or girl racer types who career round Langdale Road and Bull Pond Lane at 50 mph - these are the people who need taking off our roads. I don't see that a 20mph limit will reduce their speed to a safe level. In Hillyfields, where I live, it is very rarely that I see anybody going faster than 30mph.

Whilst I support your aims, I don't support the reduction in the overall speed limit from 30mph to 20mph

Please register my objection to the proposal for a blanket 20mph speed limit in west Dunstable for the following reasons.

1 - The blanket 20mph limit proposed in Dunstable is inappropriate

1.1 *"Blanket 20mph speed limits or limits at inappropriate sites risk widespread disregard by drivers who do not recognise a necessity for them. Consultation with, and buy-in from, local people here is essential". [Kevin Delaney, head of road safety IAM - quoted by www.dunstabletoday.co.uk 17 Aug 2011].*

1.2 If the 30mph limit is regularly broken on certain roads by a minority and is not, or cannot be, enforced, it seems unlikely that such people will change their behaviour when a lower limit is applied. This will lead to tailgating, intimidation of motorists driving at 20mph, and inappropriate overtaking thus increasing accident potential.

1.3 If there has been public consultation (over and above the legal minimum), I have seen no evidence of it. This proposal will affect the majority of residents of Dunstable. Notices on lampposts are only read by people who walk past them. The notices do not say the proposal affects both SW and NW Dunstable; they only mention roads in the relevant quadrant. A public notice appeared in the "LDexpress", which is not circulated in my immediate area. It did not appear in the "Luton & Dunstable Herald & Post" or "Luton on Sunday", which are delivered to my area. In Dunstable Library, there is no display board alerting residents to the proposal. A librarian, if asked, will make available an A4 envelope with documents describing the proposal, but not justifying it.

1.4 During the week starting 21 November, I asked four of my immediate neighbours and three strangers at the local shops whether they were aware of the proposal. Hardly a large or scientific sample, I know. However, only one person was aware of the proposal, "heard my kids talking about it"; the rest were unaware. Not one was in favour of a 20mph limit. Their spontaneous reaction included the words, "ridiculous", "stupid", and "daft".

1.6 A cynic may suggest that there is deliberate attempt to minimise public awareness of the proposal.

2 - A 20mph limit is unnecessary

2.1 In the Statement of Reasons it says, “*vehicle speeds in most of the roads are already below 30mph*”; this infers that most drivers on residential roads drive to the conditions. Retaining the 30mph limit allows drivers to continue to exercise judgement and personal responsibility.

3 - Residents will be frustrated and angered by unnecessary restrictions

3.1 SW Dunstable residents reach their homes via roads such as Meadway, Canesworde Road, Langdale Road, Lowther Road, Oldhill and Bull Pond Lane. That was the design of the areas involved. They are the main access roads for residents. The daily frustration of driving at 20mph will create anger and resentment at unnecessary regulation. Some will drive unsafely, for example, as already mentioned, by overtaking dangerously. Others, myself included, will do their best to obey the law but resent it and the mindset of those imposing it.

3.2 The term “rat run” is applied to these routes because non-residents also use them to avoid congestion in the town centre. The word “rat” in this context is unpleasant. Such drivers are exercising their right to choose the least frustrating route to go about their business.

4 - School site hazards are largely due to parental and pupil behaviour not excess speed

4.1 The proposal suggests there are particular hazards outside schools and mentions (in SW Dunstable) Ardley Hill and Queensbury schools. These schools already have a speed camera and a pedestrian crossing outside their sites. The main hazard outside these schools is motorists delivering and collecting their children, five days a week at specific times during a school term. At such times traffic travels slowly because of parked cars and oncoming vehicles. The main responsibility for the safety of pupils rests with the driver delivering or collecting them. Older students have a responsibility to show consideration and common sense to pedestrians and road users when walking to and from school. An area wide, blanket, 20mph limit twenty-four hours a day every day of the year for the benefit of pupils is illogical.

5 - Gesture politics and political correctness are not reasons for a 20mph speed limit

5.1 Traffic planners and elected representatives need to recognise that ideals about the environment, life without risk, cycling and walking (perhaps desirable in a perfect world) are not going to change peoples' behaviour unless measures are implemented in a practical, imaginative and fair way and with their consent. A blanket 20mph speed limit in west Dunstable will frustrate and antagonise the law abiding and be ignored by many. Some will view it as a politically correct device to be able to report, “something has been done”.

20 mph SPEED LIMIT FOR CANESWORDE ROAD, DUNSTABLE - SPLENDID IDEA

Splendid idea, but difficult to enforce. How would that be done, a speed camera taking car and motorbike registration numbers ?

How about banning partial on the pavement parking, when there is off- the- road parking available in people`s drives ?

The road is often one way due to this partial on the road parking, for ordinary drivers, and the emergency services - fire, police, ambulance, and the Luton & Dunstable Guided Busway buses in a few months time.

Best wishes to you all, and this splendid idea.

I have been a resident of Princes Street for over 9 years, during this time speeding cars in the Prince Regent area have become an increasing problem. Many cars drive in excess of the current 30mph speed limit, despite the traffic calming measures.
I welcome the introduction of a 20mph limit and hope it will be clearly signposted at the entrance of each road and strictly enforced.

THE ROAD SAFETY SCHEME TO BRING IN 20MPH LIMITS ON CERTAIN ROADS IS A POSITIVE IDEA. THE SPEED ON MANY ROADS IS OFTEN CONTROLLED BY VEHICLES PARKED LEGALLY AND OFTEN ILLEGALLY ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ROAD. BUT THERE ARE OTHERS WHICH REQUIRE URGENT ACTION

THE SPEED OF TRAFFIC IN WHIPSNAD RD. FROM THE WEST ST. ROUNDABOUT TO AT LEAST THE 30MPH. SIGN APPROX. 300YDS. AWAY IS OFTEN UNBELIEVABLE. THIS ROAD IS A "RAT RUN" FOR TRAFFIC COMING AND GOING ON THE WEST SIDE OF DUNSTABLE TO AVOID THE A5. THE SPEED OF THE TRAFFIC COMING DOWN THE HILL IS OFTEN EXCESSIVE AND LIVING IN ROYCE CLOSE THE SPEED LIMIT SIGN IS LESS 100YDS. AWAY.

A POSITIVE MEANS OF CONTROLLING THE SPEED OF THE TRAFFIC ON THIS SECTION OF ROAD MUST BE A PRIORITY.

Dear Sir

I would just like to add my support to this proposal and would say that this is about time that this should happen, I would also like to suggest that some traffic calming is introduced such as speed humps or pyramids or road calming - narrowing etc, especially in Roads such as Lowther Road, Langdale Road, Canesworde Road and Meadway, otherwise the speed limit will just be ignored, as is the 30mph at the moment, as these roads have become a total rat run

I think this is an excellent idea and fully support the proposal

Appendix F



PROPOSED

Your Reference: Proposed 20mph speed limit Zones-North West and South West Areas, Dunstable.

<p>This Authority has considered the proposed 20 mph speed limit zones for North West and South West Dunstable as outlined in your letter and offer the following comments for further consideration.</p> <p>Comments Without appropriate road engineering on the main through roads this authority will not support this scheme. At present we have live speeding issues concerning the 30 mph limits within this proposed scheme, it is clear that if the motorist is flaunting the 30mph limit that a 20 mph limit without engineering will not change their attitudes and only increase complaints and demands on the Police.</p>	X

Name: - ...John Loughlin

Address ...Traffic Management Unit,
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Road Policing Unit.
Police Headquarters,
Woburn Road,
Kempston,
Beds. MK43 9AX.

Signed:- ...S. P. Welham.

Appendix G

I refer to Nick Chapman's letter of 9 November to Nick Cook at the Highways Agency about the above proposal.

I can confirm that the Highways Agency has no objection to the making of the proposed Orders.

However, although this may not be particularly significant, we would be interested to know what assessment (if any) your authority has made to look at the impact on the A5 of traffic avoiding the 20mph zones when they are in place. More importantly, we would like your assurance that when you come to sign the new speed limits off the side roads at/near the junction with the A5 trunk road, we will be consulted well in advance. To elaborate on this, we would clearly need to be consulted where signs/posts are required to be erected on trunk road land, but also for other signs adjacent to the A5, where there may be visibility issues that need to be addressed.

If Central Beds Highways do need to access the A5 for signing purposes, we may also need to look at setting up a Section 6 agreement with your authority, but this could be something we could discuss through one of our regular liaison meetings with the Council.

I hope that by putting these concerns in writing at this stage, we will ensure your future signing plans are accommodated to both authorities satisfaction. Please continue to address future correspondence to Nick Cook, who can be also contacted at nick.cook@highways.gsi.gov.uk, or by telephone on 01234 796040.

Yours Sincerely

Andy Burns

Andy Burns, Asset Development Team Administrator

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GTN: 3013 6428

Safe roads, Reliable journeys, Informed travellers
Highways Agency, an Executive Agency of the Department for Transport.

Your ref: GPB/49739/3.12/500542

Our ref: HA 72/17/109

Appendix H

Summary of combined speeds taken September 2011				
Road	Location	Mean Average	85%ile	
Meadway	LC 14	27.3	30.7	
Langdale	LC 12	24.4	28.0	
Oldhill	LC 17	31.0	35.9	
Lowther	O/S 548	28.0	31.8	