
Meeting: Traffic Management Meeting
Date: 21 November 2013
Subject: Flitton and Greenfield – Consider Objections to Proposed Speed Limits
Report of: Jane Moakes, Assistant Director Environmental Services
Summary: This report seeks the approval of the Executive Member for Sustainable Communities - Services for the implementation of new speed limits in Flitton and Greenfield following the receipt of objections.

Contact Officer: Nick Chapman
nick.chapman@amey.co.uk
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: Westoning, Flitton and Greenfield
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The proposal will improve road safety.

Financial:

The works are being part-funded by Flitton and Greenfield Parish Council to the sum of £10,000.00. The remainder is from the Council's holistic budget (£16,500.00) and from revenue commuted budget (£5,000.00)

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 improve road safety for all road users, including pedestrians, and residents

Sustainability:

A reduction in vehicle speeds will encourage lower vehicle emissions and encourage walking and cycling.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. That the proposals to introduce a 40mph speed limit in Flitton Hill be implemented as published.**
- 2. That the proposals to introduce a 20mph speed limit in High Street, Flitton Road and Pulloxhill Road, Greenfield be implemented as published.**

Background and Information

1. Bedfordshire Highways was instructed to consider the following traffic calming in Flitton and Greenfield. The following measures were requested by the Parish Council:-
 - Reversal of priorities at the High Street/Pulloxhill Road junction including a raised crossing point. It is proposed to undertake the required junction changes and install the informal raised crossing. Notices were published for the raised feature, but no objections were received.
 - Introduce speed management measures on Flitton Hill. It was felt that the most suitable solution would be to introduce a 40mph buffer zone in advance of the existing 30mph speed limit.
 - 20mph for the approaches to the Pulloxhill Road junction on a minimum signage basis. It was felt that this should be extended to cover the centre of Greenfield, including the area adjacent to the school.
 - Introduction of a 40mph speed limit between Greenfield and Flitwick. It was felt that this should not be pursued at present due to insufficient funding and its lower priority relative to the other elements.
2. The proposals for the 40mph and 20mph speed limits were formally advertised by public notice in August and September 2013. Consultations were carried out with the emergency services and other statutory bodies, Flitton and Greenfield Parish Council and the Ward Member. Residents likely to be directly affected by the proposals were consulted individually and notices were displayed on street. A total of 3 objections have been received to the proposals.
3. Flitton and Greenfield Parish Council objects to the proposed 40mph speed limit on Flitton Hill. A copy of the correspondence is included in Appendix D. The main points of objection are summarised below:-
 - a) The existing 30mph speed limit should be moved northwards to the point where the proposed 40mph limit would start. At present drivers heading up Flitton Hill leaving the village can see the national speed limit signs and begin to accelerate, resulting in unacceptably high vehicle speeds. The proposed 40mph limit will not significantly help in this respect.

- b) The Parish Council's preferred option would be to extend the 30mph speed limit and introduce a 40mph buffer zone outwards to the Ampthill Road junction, thereby covering outlying properties.
 - c) Flitton Hill has no footway and is regularly used by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, which are put in danger by excessive vehicle speeds.
4. Two residents have submitted representations on the proposed 20mph speed limit in Greenfield. Copies of the correspondence are included in Appendix D. The main points of concern are as follows:-
- a) The proposed 20mph zone is welcome, but does not go far enough. It is suggested that the whole village be covered by a 20mph speed limit, or at least that part of Greenfield Road, Flitton near to the village hall and playing field.
 - b) Drivers will be accelerating/decelerating in the area near to the 20mph/30mph speed limit change over point, thereby increasing noise and risk to adjacent residents.
 - c) The frequent speed limit changes will confuse drivers.

5. Bedfordshire Police's comments are as follows:-

"We have no problems with the 20 mph limit on School Lane, Holmewood Road or Flitton Road as the road layout in its present form or the calming features present should make the traffic conform.

It says in the paperwork submitted that further traffic calming features were to be put in but it does not say what this consists of.

Further calming would be required on the High Street and Pulloxhill Road to ensure conformity of the new proposed speed limit.

The new proposed 40 mph limit leading to Flitton Hill is a speed limit and not as I was under the impression only going to be a buffer zone (less than 200 meters) Should this go ahead it must be realised that the chances of enforcement are virtually nil."

Responses and Conclusion

6. Bedfordshire Highways' response to the points above in relation to the proposed 40mph speed limit in Flitton Hill are as follows:-
- a) It is felt that the extent of the existing 30mph is correct in that it covers the main built-up part of the village. If the 30mph speed limit was extended to the length of Flitton Hill further north where roadside development is very sparse, drivers would fail to understand the need for such a low limit and compliance would be poor. This could lead to abuse of the 30mph limit on that length of Flitton Hill where it is really needed.

- b) The proposed 40mph speed limit is intended as a buffer zone, which should result in lower speeds as drivers enter the 30mph speed limit. This should lead to better compliance with the 30mph limit. A longer extension of the 40mph limit covering mainly open countryside would not be understood by drivers and would be ignored by many.
 - c) It felt that the proposal offers the best road safety solution for all road users. The combination of 30 and 40mph speed limits should lead to an overall reduction in vehicle speeds and consequential safety benefits.
7. Bedfordshire Highways' response to the points above in relation to the proposed 20mph speed limit in Greenfield are as follows:-
- a) 20mph speed limits and zones are applied to roads that either have traffic calming measures or the road layout, width and characteristics naturally lends itself to lower vehicle speeds. They are typically used in residential streets, town centres or at locations with a high proportion of vulnerable road users, such as near to schools. The part of Greenfield that would be covered by the proposed 20mph limit is the most heavily built-up part of both villages, contains a school and has some physical speed-reducing measures. It is anticipated that drivers will understand the need for a 20mph limit and compliance will be reasonable. If a 20mph limit was applied to a wider area, this would lead to a high level of abuse and driver frustration
 - b) Given that drivers will only be adjusting their speed by 10mph it is expected that any acceleration/deceleration will not be too severe and any consequential increase in noise will be negligible.
 - c) It is becoming more common for drivers to encounter regular speed limit changes as a result of buffer zones on the edges of settlements, 20mph limits and the overall 30mph default limit in built-up areas. Hence, motorists should get more familiar with seeing a range of different speed limits and adjusting their behaviour accordingly. It is felt that the changes proposed for Flitton and Greenfield will not lead to an unacceptable mixture of different limits and will be easy for drivers to understand.
8. Bedfordshire Highways' response to Bedfordshire Police's comments above are as follows:-

There are already some speed reducing measures in place in Greenfield and a raised table is proposed to be installed near to the Flitton Road/Pulloxhill Road junction. No objections were received to that proposal.

If implemented, compliance with the proposed 20mph speed limit will be monitored and if necessary further traffic calming measures will be considered.

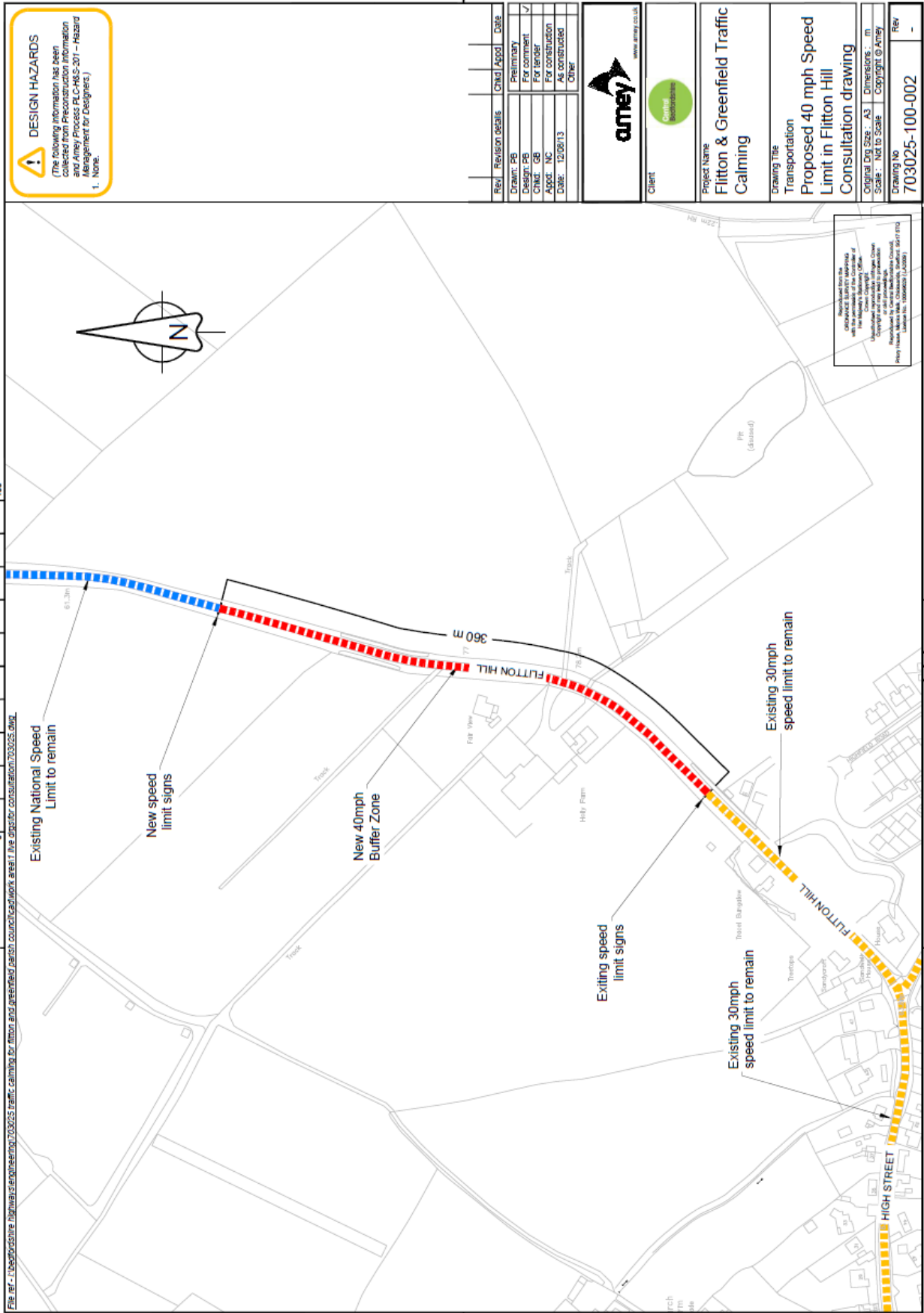
It is recognised that the proposed 40mph speed limit on Flitton Hill extends further than normal for a buffer limit, but it has been designed to cover outlying properties and to ensure good forward visibility of the terminal signs.

9. It is considered that both of the speed limit proposals are reasonable and fall broadly in line with recognised national guidance, so should be implemented as published.

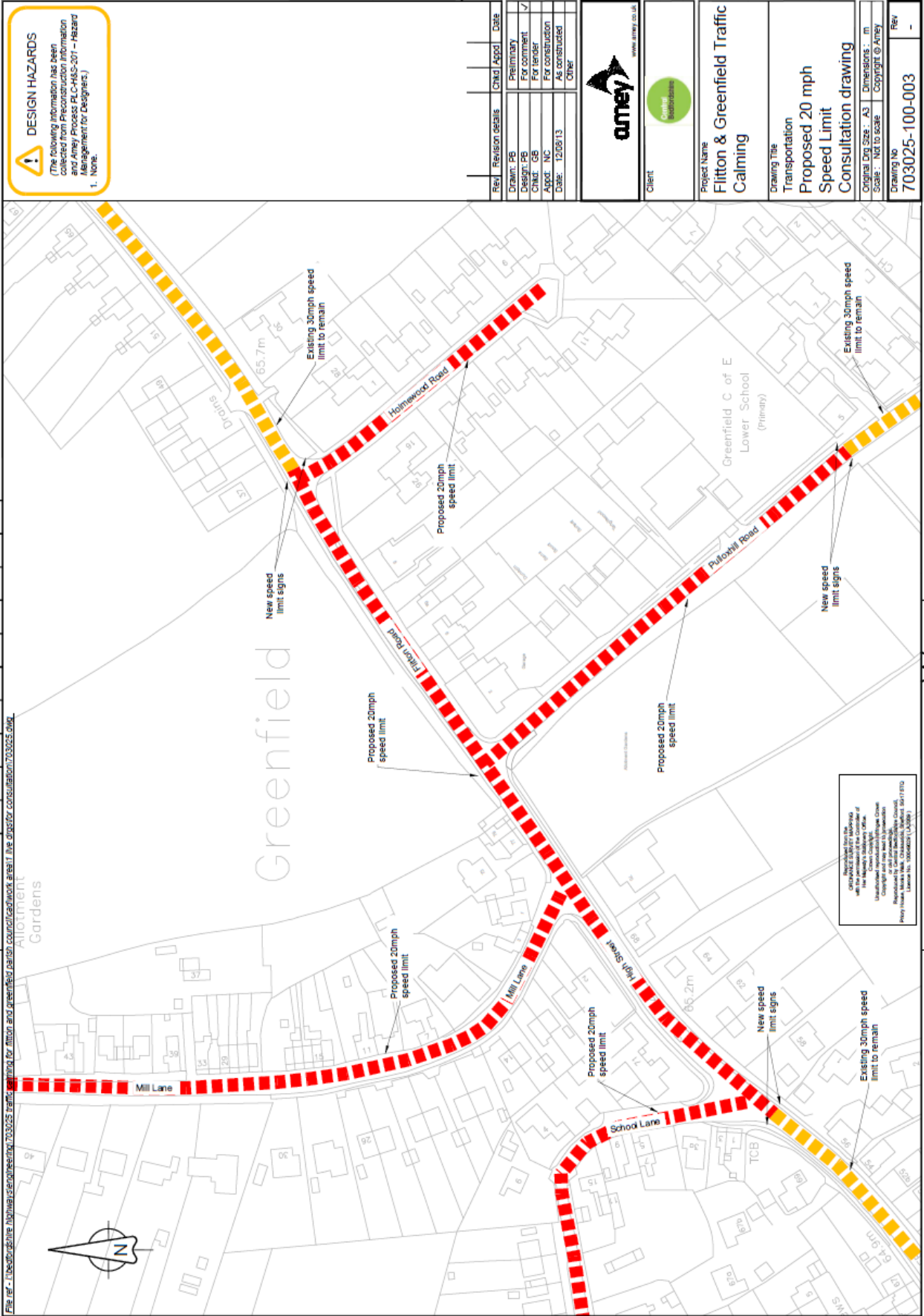
Appendices:

- Appendix A – Drawing of Proposed 40mph Speed Limit in Flitton Hill
- Appendix B – Drawing of Proposed 20mph Speed Limit in Greenfield
- Appendix C – Public Notice of Proposals
- Appendix D – Representations

Appendix A



Appendix B



DESIGN HAZARDS
 (The following information has been collected from Precast Information and Arney Process PLC-HAS-207 - Hazard Management for Designers.)
 1. None.

Rev	Revision details	Chkd	Appd	Date
Drawn: PB	Preliminary			
Design: PB	For comment			
Chkd: GB	For tender			
Appd: NC	For construction			
Date: 12/08/13	As constructed			
	Other			

arney
 www.arney.co.uk
 Client:

Project Name
Flitton & Greenfield Traffic Calming

Drawing Title
Transportation Proposed 20 mph Speed Limit Consultation drawing

Original Dwg Size: A3	Dimensions: m
Scale: Not to scale	Copyright © Arney
Drawing No	Rev
703025-100-003	-

File ref.: D:\Descriptive Highway Engineering\703025 Traffic Calming for Flitton and Greenfield parish council\cadwork area\10e.dwg for consultation\703025.dwg

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PUBLIC NOTICE

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL PROPOSES TO INTRODUCE A 20MPH SPEED LIMIT IN HIGH STREET, FLITTON ROAD & PULLOXHILL ROAD, GREENFIELD AND A 40MPH SPEED LIMIT IN FLITTON HILL, FLITTON

Reason for proposal: The proposed Orders are considered necessary for avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road and for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising and for preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs. The proposed 20mph speed limit will cover that part of Greenfield, including the Lower School, where pedestrian activity is high. Traffic calming measures are already in place on these roads or are planned. The proposed 40mph speed limit is intended to act as a "buffer" between the existing national speed limit and the 30mph speed limit on Flitton Hill and should reduce the speed of vehicles entering the village.

Effect of the Orders:

To introduce a 20mph Speed Limit on the following lengths of road in Greenfield:-

High Street, from its junction with Flitton Road extending in a south-westerly direction to its junction with School Lane.

Flitton Road, from its junction with High Street extending in a north-easterly direction to its junction with Holmewood Road.

Pulloxhill Road, from its junction with High Street/Flitton Road extending in a south-easterly direction to the boundary of Greenfield Lower School and no.5 Pulloxhill Road.

School Lane, for its entire length.

Mill Lane, for its entire length.

Holmewood Road, for its entire length.

Previous Speed Limit Orders made on the lengths of road specified above would be revoked if the proposed Speed Limits are implemented.

To introduce a 40mph Speed Limit on the following length of road in Flitton:-

Flitton Road, from a point approximately 173 metres north-east of its junction with High Street extending in a generally northerly direction for a distance of approximately 360 metres

Further Details: of the proposals and plans may be examined during normal opening hours at Flitwick Library, Coniston Rd, Flitwick MK45 1QJ or online at

www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/publicstatutorynotices. 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.

Objections: should be sent in writing to the Transportation Manager, Bedfordshire Highways, Woodlands Annex, Manton Lane, Bedford MK41 7NU or e-mail centralbedsconsultation@amey.co.uk stating the grounds on which they are made by 17 September 2013.

Order Titles: If made will be "Central Bedfordshire Council (20mph Speed Limit) (High Street, Flitton Road and Pulloxhill Road, Greenfield) Order 201*" and "Central Bedfordshire Council (40mph Speed Limit) (Flitton Hill, Flitton) Order 201**"

Central Bedfordshire Council
Priory House
Chicksands
Shefford SG1917 5TQ

Marcel Coiffait
Director of Community Services

22 August 2013

Appendix D

Objection to 40mph speed limit on Flitton Hill

I object to the proposal to introduce a 40 mph buffer zone as detailed in the consultation. I have discussed this at length with residents on Flitton Hill and also raised with the full Parish Council.

At the Parish Council meeting this evening it was agreed that the Parish Council object to the proposal to leave the 30 mph speed limit on Flitton Hill where it is. As a Parish Council we asked Amey that the 30 mph sign be moved or other measures be introduced to achieve the same effect of reduced speeds on Flitton Hill. Whilst the proposed introduction of a 40 mph buffer zone may reduce the speed of traffic entering the village, it will do nothing to reduce the speed of traffic travelling up Flitton Hill to leave the village. The position of the current end of speed limit sign encourages cars to accelerate sharply from the bottom of Flitton Hill, which is one of the reasons why we asked that the sign be moved so that it was out of sight of traffic travelling up the hill. We are not confident that a 40 mph sign replacing the no limit sign in the same position will reduce this effect.

Our preference is for the 30 mph sign to be moved the 360 m to the position of the proposed entry to the 40 mph zone and the 40 mph buffer zone extended from there to the junction with Ampthill Road. This will not only remove the incentive for cars to accelerate as they leave the built up area, it will also include the properties at the top of the hill and the village allotments within the 30 mph zone. This is important as these have concealed entrances. A 40 mph buffer zone extending to the junction with Ampthill Road is also important because there is a blind corner and junction with a farm road immediately after a vehicle enters Flitton Hill from that junction.

Flitton Hill is regularly used by walkers, joggers, cyclists and horse riders. There is no pavement for pedestrians, even in the built up section. It is a narrow road. The traffic speeds dangerously and something has to be done before there is a serious accident. Our preference for a 30 mph zone extended past the last property and the allotments on the top of the hill and 40 mph zone from there to the junction with Ampthill Road would not cost any more than the current proposal. Instead of a new gated entrance with 40 mph signs by the allotments and new signs to replace the existing 30 mph/no limit signs with 30 mph/40 mph signs there would be a new 30 mph gated entrance by the allotments with new 40 mph/no limit signs at the Ampthill Road junction.

The Parish Council are not happy to proceed with the current Amey proposals and would like to know whether the alternative outlined above can be implemented instead and if not why not. I would be happy to discuss this in more detail.

Chair of Highways sub committee
Flitton & Greenfield Parish Council

Representations on proposed 20mph speed limit in Greenfield

I live at no. xx Flitton Road, and wish to comment on the proposals to change the traffic management in my area.

I support the move to introduce 20mph limits, but I cannot see the rationale for the mixture of 20 and 30mph limits.

If the 20mph limit is designed to increase safety in the area around the school, why doesn't this same argument apply to the area around the Village Hall and children's playground on Greenfield Road? Has the village hall and children's playground area been considered in need of a 20mph limit?

If a 20 limit is followed by a 30 limit, this places my house in an acceleration and deceleration zone, increasing both noise and risk. Has the impact of this been assessed?

The changes in limits also risks creating confusion, as there will be three limits (40, 30 and 20) all within a very short road length. Is there evidence that drivers are able to make sense of and adhere to such a series of changing limits?

The driver time saving of retaining a stretch of road at a 30mph limit (rather than continuing the 20 limit throughout Flitton and Greenfield) amounts to less than 60 seconds over the less than a mile from the start of Flitton Road to Flitton Hill. Has this time saving been assessed as critical as against the increased safety of continuing the 20mph limit to include the village hall and children's playground?

I would be grateful if these questions could be taken into consideration.

We have lived in Greenfield since March this year and it immediately became clear that there is a problem with drivers speeding through Flitton and Greenfield. Drivers often do not observe the existing speed limit and are not deterred by the existing flashing speed limit sign in Flitton. It seems to us that it's only a matter of time before there's an injury or fatality on the road through the villages and that drastic action is overdue.

We therefore welcome the planned 20mph speed limit through parts of Greenfield although we do not think the plans go far enough. We strongly believe that the 20mph speed limit should apply on entrance to Greenfield (at the Flitwick end) right through to Flitton. Our reasons are:

- Varying the speed limit within Greenfield (as per the current proposals) is likely to cause confusion and irritation and result in the limits being broken.
- Removing the 20mph limit and increasing to 30mph within Greenfield (just after Holmewood Rd) is likely to cause drivers to accelerate into the 30mph zone, which is both dangerous and disruptive to residents in that area, with the associated engine sounds of acceleration.
- Relating to this, with drivers likely to accelerate hard out of the 20mph zone and into the 30mph it is likely that they will accelerate even beyond 30mph. This is evidenced by the behaviour of drivers as they accelerate on exit from but are still inside Greenfield (at the Flitwick end) in anticipation of the 40mph and national speed limit zones.
- Drivers already routinely break the 30mph speed limit and do not respond to the flashing 30mph limit in Flitton so reducing the limit to 20mph all along that road will at least give some hope of cars travelling at a safer speed.

The stretch of Flitton Rd into Greenfield Rd (starting from Holmewood Rd) is home to several older people and families with young children. Where these groups of people live or walk, it is widely accepted that lower speed limits should apply - not, as you propose, higher ones compared with other parts of the village. Furthermore, you propose to maintain the higher (30mph) limit on the road where the children's playground and village hall are situated. Accessing these community facilities involves crossing the road with restricted visibility as there is a bend in the road north of their entrances. It makes no sense whatsoever to maintain a 30mph limit in this area.

On the whole we welcome the safety measures and reduced speed limits outlined in your proposals. However, they do not go far enough. It is in your power to do so much more to ensure the safety and quality of life of the residents of Flitton and Greenfield. Living in Greenfield, we are particularly concerned about the impact of the varying speed limits you plan to introduce and implore you to apply one 20mph limit through the two villages, as can be found in many villages throughout the UK.

Finally, with the new speed limit in place, attention needs to be paid to methods of deterring and punishing law breaking on the roads. We have observed that speeding drivers do not respond to the flashing sign in Flitton so other means such as police cameras may need to be assessed.

Thank you for considering my response.