

Individual Executive Member Decision

Title of Report:	A4 Padworth - Proposed 50mph Speed Limit
Report to be considered by:	Individual Executive Member Decision
Date on which Decision is to be taken:	20 September 2012
Forward Plan Ref:	ID 2470 (A)

Purpose of Report: To inform the Executive Member for Highways, Transport (Operational), ICT & Customer Services of the revised proposal to introduce a 50mph speed limit following the meeting of OSMC.

Recommended Action: That the Executive Member for Highways, Transport (Operational), ICT & Customer Services resolves to approve the recommendations as set out in Section 4 of this report.

Reason for decision to be taken: To enable the proposed speed limit to be introduced.

Other options considered: N/A

Key background documentation:

- Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission - 29 May 2012.
- Individual Decision (ID 2470) dated 26 April 2012.
- Email objection - 3rd February 2012.
- Minutes of the Speed Limit Review - 20th December 2010 and 29th August 2012.
- Individual Decision (ID 2144) – Speed Limit Review December 2010.
- Plan No. SLR/10/04/002B

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Keith Chopping - (0118) 983 2057
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Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Andrew Garratt
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Implications

Policy:	The consultation is in accordance with the Council's Consultation procedures.
Financial:	The introduction of the speed limit will be funded from the approved Capital Programme.
Personnel:	None arising from this report.
Legal/Procurement:	The Sealing of the Traffic Regulation Order will be undertaken by Legal Services.
Environmental:	A reduced speed limit will make a more pleasant and safer environment for local residents.
Property:	None arising from this report.
Risk Management:	None arising from this report.
Equalities Impact Assessment:	EIA Stage 1 attached as Appendix A.

Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council:	Councillor Graham Jones To date no response has been received, however any comments will be verbally reported at the Individual Decision meeting.
Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman:	Councillor Brian Bedwell - Thank you for your amendments which I am pleased to accept.
Ward Members:	<p>Councillor Irene Neill (Aldermaston Ward) - I still fully support the recommendation of the Speed Limit Task Group re this reduction of the speed limit.</p> <p>With regards to the OSMC minutes and the reasons for call in I would refer to number 8 which says that the incident involving an elderly man being pushed across the road was wholly exceptional I would point out that this elderly couple lived in one of the properties on the south side of the A4 and used the public bus service therefore this was probably not the only time they had crossed the road after getting off the bus on the south side of the road - sadly the incident meant it was the last time for this particular gentleman. I am not aware of any other elderly residents in wheel chairs but I am pretty sure there are parents using the bus service who will have to push their child across in a buggy. This new residential development (and further developments with planning permission) means that there will be more people needing to cross the road as the likelihood is that some of these residents will not have their own transport.</p> <p>The local residents are also very unhappy that the lowering of the speed limit which they had anticipated may not now</p>

be happening and I support their desire to make this stretch of road as safe as possible - I add the caveat that this lowering of the speed limit may not make a huge difference and that we may have to look at a safer means of crossing in the future, however it is better to at least take this step than do nothing.

Councillor Keith Chopping (Beenham Ward) - This proposal is actually partly in my Ward and partly in Mortimer Ward. I am in support of Beenham Parish Council and of a speed limit of 50 mph being introduced on this section of the A4.

Mollie Lock (Padworth Ward) - To date no response has been received, however any comments will be verbally reported at the Individual Decision meeting.

Councillor Geoff Mayes (Padworth Ward) - I can confirm that Padworth Parish Councillors at their meeting on Monday 9th July severely criticised the four WBC Councillors for Calling In the recommended reduction in the speed limit on the A4 at Padworth from 60 mph to 50mph. They were especially indignant that the 4 Councillors were somewhat remote from the area of concern.

Opposition Spokesperson:

Councillor Keith Woodhams - To date no response has been received, however any comments will be verbally reported at the Individual Decision meeting.

Local Stakeholders:

N/A

Officers Consulted:

Mark Cole and Mark Edwards

Trade Union:

N/A

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Report is to note only	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 In August 2006 the Department for Transport (DfT) published Circular 01/2006 Setting Local Speed Limits, which superseded the guidance, set in 1993. As part of the new guidance all traffic authorities had to review the speed limits on all of their A and B classified roads in accordance with the new guidance.
- 1.2 The length of the A4 between the A340 roundabout at Aldermaston and the A340 roundabout at Theale was considered by the Speed Limit Review task group at its meeting on 21st April 2010 when further traffic data was requested before making a recommendation. This length of A4 together with the additional data was re-considered at its meeting on 1st December 2010 when it was recommended that the length of A4 between a point to the west of the A340 Aldermaston roundabout and east of its junction to Beenham be reduced to 50mph. This was approved by Individual Decision (ref ID 2144) on 27th January 2011.
- 1.3 During the statutory consultation and advertisement of the speed limit proposal, which was undertaken between 12th January and 2nd February 2012, one objection was received from a resident of Sulham. This objection was considered by Individual Decision (ID 2470) on 26 April 2012 when it was agreed to introduce the 50mph as advertised.

2. Call in of Individual Decision.

- 2.1 The Decision was then 'called in' on 3rd May 2012 by five members (Councillors Richard Crumly, Dominic Boeck, Sheila Ellison, Roger Croft and John Horton) citing:
- It will be unenforceable.
 - This is a main transport route and any reduction will limit the amount of throughput the channel can handle.
 - The reduction may have an adverse effect on commuters and other users getting to and from the M4.
 - The reduction may cause traffic to migrate elsewhere to less suitable roads.
 - The accident record does not justify a speed limit reduction.
 - Any perceived hazard at the junction of the dual carriageway with the Beenham Road can be curtailed by ensuring the traffic exiting Beenham can only turn left.
 - The accident record on this stretch of road is good.
 - There have been two accidents reported recently, neither of which should be used as a justification for reducing the speed limit and one of them was a wholly exceptional incident where an elderly man was being pushed across the road in a wheelchair.
 - We have driven to and fro along the road on many occasions and never seen a pedestrian seeking to cross at any time.
 - The stretch of dual carriageway, in particular, is quite inappropriate for a limit as low as 50 mph. The problem on our roads at the present time is congestion, not the speed of traffic. In fact, the high element of congestion tends to reduce the speed of traffic naturally.

- 2.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC) at its meeting on 29 May 2012 considered the reasons for the call in of the Individual Decision. An extract of the OSMC minutes relating to the speed limit are shown as Appendix B.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 When assessing a speed limit the Speed Limit Task Group consider a number of factors which include government guidance on setting speed limits, the recorded injury accident record, results of traffic surveys, public anxiety, the nature and character of the road. This section of the A4 at Padworth has been considered by the speed limit task group on two occasions when it was agreed that a 50mph speed limit was appropriate.
- 3.2 In the latest three year period, to the end of April 2012 there had been 10 recorded injury accidents within the length of the proposed speed limit, which have resulted in 1 fatal, 3 serious and 6 slight accidents.
- 3.3 The results of traffic surveys undertaken during May 2010 in the vicinity of Padworth Close (located at the western end of the dual carriageway) showed that the mean speed of westbound traffic was 41mph with an 85th percentile speed of 47mph.
- 3.4 Circular 1/2006 Setting Local Speed Limits indicates that when assessing a 50mph speed limit on an A or B classified road the accident rate should be above the threshold of 35 injury accidents per 100 million vehicle kilometres and/or the mean speed already below 50mph. The accident rate is 38.7 injury accidents per 100 million vehicle kilometres, which is above the specified threshold and mean vehicle speeds are below 50mph.
- 3.5 Given the recorded injury accident record, the results of the traffic surveys and the recommendation of the speed limit task group it is considered that a 50mph speed limit is appropriate should be introduced. However given the comments at the OSMC and the concerns about the location of the start of the 50mph speed limit at the eastern end, it is recommended that the start of the 50mph be located approximately 140 metres to the west of its advertised location, thus reducing the extent of the new speed limit. This will ensure that the junction to Beenham and the entrances to the garage and residential properties are within the lower speed limit. This location is shown on Plan No SLR/10/04/002B.
- 3.6 The reasons for the call in and the revised proposals were considered by the Speed Limit Task Group at its meeting on 29th August 2012. The task group fully supported the revised proposal for introducing the 50mph speed limit.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 That the proposed speed limit is introduced with the start of the speed limit at the eastern end being located approximately 140 metres to the west of its advertised location as shown on Plan No SLR/10/04/002B (Appendix C).

Appendices

Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment – Stage 1

Appendix B – Extract of the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission held on 29 May 2012 when this item was discussed

Appendix C – Plan No SLR/10/04/002B

Equality Impact Assessment – Stage One

Name of item being assessed:	A4 Padworth – Proposed 50mph Speed Limit.
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	5 July 2012
Owner of item being assessed:	Andrew Garratt, Principal Traffic & Road Safety Engineer
Name of assessor:	Andrew Garratt
Date of assessment:	5 July 2012

1. What are the main aims of the item?
The main aim of this item is to introduce a 50mph limit on the A4 through Padworth. This is in accordance with DfT Circular 01/2006 requesting that all authorities review the speed limits on all A and B class roads and seeks to improve road safety at this location.

2. Note which groups may be affected by the item, consider how they may be affected and what sources of information have been used to determine this. (Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation)		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this.
Local Residents	Improved road safety	Lower vehicle speeds in built up area.
Elderly Pedestrians	Improved road safety	Slower speeds will make safer environment.
Person with less mobility	Will feel safer when crossing the road.	Slower speeds will make safer environment.
Child pedestrians	Improved road safety	Slower vehicle speeds will give motorists more time to react to an unexpected situation.
Further comments relating to the item: N/a		

3. Result (please tick by double-clicking on relevant box and click on 'checked')	
<input type="checkbox"/>	High Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Low Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No Relevance - This does not need to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment

For items requiring a Stage 2 equality impact assessment, begin the planning of this now, referring to the equality impact assessment guidance and Stage 2 template.

4. Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	
Stage Two not required:	Not required

Name: Andrew Garratt

Date: 5 July 2012