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# Hungerford Common and Colthrop 30mph Speed Limit Consultation

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<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Individual Executive Member Decisions
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> August 2021
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Richard Somner
<b>Report Author:</b>	Gareth Dowding
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	ID 4058

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## 1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform the Executive Member for Planning, Transport and Countryside of the responses received during the statutory consultation on the introduction of 30mph speed limits at Hungerford Common and on Colthrop Lane and Gables Way in Thatcham and to seek approval of officer recommendations.

## 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that:
- (a) both the proposed 30mph speed limits are introduced as advertised and that the objectors are informed accordingly;
  - (b) the proposed 30mph speed limits are monitored for a period of 18 months from the date of implementation in order to gauge their effectiveness and a report of the findings is submitted for review by the Speed Limit Review Task Group if appropriate.

## 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	The implementation of the physical sign works will be funded from existing Capital budgets as part of the Network Management team's Minor Works Programme for 2021-22.
<b>Human Resource:</b>	N/A

<b>Legal:</b>	The Traffic Regulation Orders required to amend the speed limits will be processed and sealed by the Legal Services team.			
<b>Risk Management:</b>	If implemented, the projects will be managed in accordance with the Environment Department's approach to risk management.			
<b>Property:</b>	N/A			
<b>Policy:</b>	The consultation was in accordance with the Council's consultation procedure.			
	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>Equalities Impact:</b>				
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		x		N/A
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		x		N/A
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>		x		N/A
<b>Health Impact:</b>		x		N/A
<b>ICT Impact:</b>		x		N/A

<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>		x		N/A
<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>		x		N/A
<b>Core Business:</b>		x		N/A
<b>Data Impact:</b>		x		N/A
<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	<p>Local stakeholders and road users were consulted on the proposed speed limit changes by way of statutory advertisement of proposed Traffic Regulation Orders.</p> <p>Affected ward members were consulted on this report during July 2021. Councillors James Cole, Claire Rowles and Steve Ardagh-Walter confirmed that they have no objection to the conclusion and recommendations.</p>			

## 4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Executive Member for Planning, Transport and Countryside of the responses received during the statutory consultation of two speed limits advertised as a result of the 2019-20 speed limit review and to seek approval of officer recommendations.
- 4.2 Objections were received to the introduction of 30mph speed limits at Hungerford Common and on Colthrop Lane and Gables Way in Thatcham. This report summarises those objections and makes a recommendation to the Executive Member that the speed limits be implemented as advertised.

## 5 Supporting Information

### Introduction

- 5.1 Requests for new or amended speed limits are considered by the Speed Limit Review Task Group, which consists of Council officers, Members and the Police. When assessing the request the Task Group consider current guidance (principally the Department for Transport Circular 01/2013 'Setting local speed limits'), traffic survey results, the number of recorded injury accidents and the local road environment. Following approval of the Task Group's recommendations, speed limit proposals are subject to a statutory consultation process. Where no objections are received, the speed limits are implemented and new signs are erected on-street, but where proposals attract statutory objections, these must be referred to the Executive Member for a decision as to how to proceed. Objections were received to two speed limits advertised as a result of the 2019-20 speed limit review and this report summarises those objections and makes a recommendation to the Executive Member.

## Background

- 5.2 Hungerford Town Council, supported by Hungerford Town & Manor, requested that the existing 40mph speed limit be reduced to 30mph across the extent of Hungerford Common.
- 5.3 Officers from the Network Management Team identified discrepancies in existing speed limits on Colthrop Lane and Gables Way in the Colthrop Industrial Area in Thatcham and suggested that the speed limits be reduced to 30mph.
- 5.4 These requests were considered by the Task Group at its meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019. The Task Group recommended that both speed limits be amended and these recommendations were approved by Individual Decision (ref ID3868) on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 and included within the following year's works programme.
- 5.5 Plans of the speed limit requests are included as Appendix C.
- 5.6 Following a delay resulting from issues associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, statutory consultation and advertisement of the proposals was undertaken between 28<sup>th</sup> January and 18<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

## Responses to Statutory Consultation and Officer Comments

### Hungerford Common

- 5.7 At the end of the statutory consultation period one objection had been received. The objector made the following points:

- (a) Whilst the request for a reduced limit arose from local concerns, many local road users are likely to be exceeding the existing limit.

Officer Comment: Whilst it is not uncommon for drivers to exceed speed limits in their own local area, our surveys are not detailed enough to discriminate between local and non-local drivers. The intention is to encourage lower speeds among all users but local publicity when the limit initially changes will raise awareness among local road users.

- (b) A reduction in recorded vehicle speeds is unlikely to occur unless additional measures are introduced and will result in further speed complaints.

Officer Comment: This point is accepted, but given the minimal amount of available highway land and the absence of a system of street lighting no additional measures, particularly physical engineering measures, are possible at this location.

- (c) This location more closely meets the criteria for a 40mph speed limit than a 30mph limit as set out in the Department for Transport Circular 01/2013 'Setting local speed limits' and given that livestock do not use the common all year round lowering the speed limit would set a bad precedent.

Officer Comment: This point is also valid, but the speed surveys recorded mean speeds of between 28 and 32mph and 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds between 33 and

38mph. This indicates that a 30mph speed limit is not unrealistic. Furthermore, Burys Bank Road, the road through the unfenced part of Greenham Common, already has a speed limit of 30mph and reducing the limit on Hungerford Common would be consistent with that.

- (d) The proposed 30mph speed limit would require additional speed limit repeater signs at set distances.

Officer Comment: The new 30mph speed limit repeater signs will utilise the existing 40mph repeater sign locations.

- (e) There could be more effective initiatives available to reduce traffic speeds that would not have such a negative impact on traffic during the winter months when the cattle aren't on the common.

Officer Comment: As above, there is little scope for alternative physical measures. It is accepted that cattle are not present during winter months, but there are other hazards during the winter, ie longer hours of darkness and colder conditions, during which lower speeds are desirable in any case.

#### Colthrop Industrial Estate Area

5.8 At the end of the statutory consultation period one objection had been received. The objector made the following points:

- (a) Would rather avoid the costs associated with officer time, lawyer fees and expenses and the cost of new signage that could be utilised elsewhere.

Officer Comment: There is an annual capital budget allocated to reviewing speed limits and implementing any resulting changes. The costs of this proposal will be funded from this budget.

- (b) The existing highway layout is of a modern standard with good visibility and generous footways that result in pedestrians not being intimidated by passing traffic.

Officer Comment: The existing highway layout meets the standards for a 30mph speed limit as set out in the Department for Transport Circular 01/2013 'Setting local speed limits'.

- (c) No evidence has been provided to justify a reduced speed limit and no accident record or evidence of regular speeding has been seen. Would like to know if any speed checks have been undertaken to provide average speed data.

Officer Comment: Speed data obtained for the Speed Limit Review indicates that recorded vehicle speeds are already consistent with the proposed 30mph speed limit. Mean speeds were recorded at 27mph on both Colthrop Lane and Gables Way, with 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds all being below 35mph.

- (d) Is the proposed speed limit a result of complaints about the existing speed limit or as the result of a petition being raised.

Officer Comment: The proposed 30mph speed limit is a result of a review of current speed limits undertaken internally by the Traffic Team and is aimed at introducing a consistent speed limit through the whole of the Colthrop industrial area. The area currently has a mixture of 30mph, 40mph and national speed limits, despite the roads being of a similar nature throughout, and this proposal will bring consistency without introducing unrealistically low limits.

## Proposals

5.9 In view of the above, is proposed that:

- (a) both the proposed 30mph speed limits are introduced as advertised and that the objectors are informed accordingly.
- (b) the proposed 30mph speed limits are monitored for a period of 18 months from the date of implementation in order to gauge their effectiveness and a report of the findings is submitted for review by the Speed Limit Review Task Group if appropriate.

## 6 Other options considered

- 6.1 Not to proceed with the proposed changes to the speed limits. As the proposed speed limit changes have been subject to a robust process and having each attracted only one statutory objection, this option is not recommended.

## 7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The Council has a robust and long standing process in place to assess requests to alter speed limits and the conclusion of this process was that the speed limits in Hungerford and Colthrop should be reduced. The proposals each attracted just one statutory objection when the draft Traffic Regulation Orders were advertised and the points made in the objections have been addressed in Section 5 of this report. It is therefore considered that the revised speed limits should be implemented as advertised.

## 8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix C – Consultation Drawings No: SLR/19/03/002 & SLR/19/04/002

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### Background Papers:

Individual Executive Member Decision report ref ID3868

### Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☒ No: ☐

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval

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- Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council ☐
- Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position ☐
- Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months ☐
- Item is Urgent Key Decision ☐
- Report is to note only ☐

**Wards affected:** Hungerford and Thatcham Colthrop & Crookham

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Document Ref:		Date Created:	
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1			
2			

## Appendix A

### Consultation Drawings SLR/19/03/002 & SLR/19/04/002