

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:	26 April 2012
Forward Plan Ref:	ID2470

Purpose of Report: To inform the Executive Member for Highways, Transport (Operational), ICT & Customer Services of the responses received during the statutory consultation on the proposed 50mph Speed Limit, on the A4 at Padworth and to seek approval of the recommendations.

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:

- Email objection - 3rd February 2012.
- Minutes of the Speed Limit Review - 20th December 2010.
- Individual Decision (ID 2144) – Speed Limit Review December 2010.
- Plan No SLR/10/04/002A

Portfolio Member Details	
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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 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 supports the proposals for the single carriageway but a speed limit should not be installed on the length which is dual carriageway.

Ward Members: Councillor Irene Neill (Aldermaston Ward) supports the proposals for the single carriageway but a speed limit should not be installed on the length which is dual carriageway.

Councillors Keith Chopping (Beenham Ward) and 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) commented that the dual carriageway section should stay at 60mph.

Opposition Spokesperson:

Councillor Keith Woodhams make the following comments:

- The A4 needs to remain signed at 60 mph, apart from towns and villages. Chopping and changing speed limits in other areas of this road will confuse drivers. I would be surprised if motorists adhered to a 50 mph speed limit in light traffic conditions.
- I would have expected a comment from the police in the ID, stating whether they felt 50 mph was a realistic speed limit on this stretch of road.

- I would not support a 50 mph speed limit on the dual carriageway as this is the earliest section of road where eastbound cars can overtake lorries safely, from as far back as Thatcham.

Local Stakeholders: N/A

Officers Consulted: Mark Cole and Mark Edwards

Trade Union: N/A

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input 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 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 1st December 2010.
- 1.3 The Task Group, having considered the guidance specified in the Circular, traffic survey results and the number of recorded injury accidents recommended that the length of the national speed limit on the 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.
- 1.4 The statutory consultation and advertisement of the speed limit proposals was undertaken between 12th January and 2nd February 2012 so that if approved they could be introduced in conjunction with a pedestrian safety scheme between Station Road and Beenham Industrial Estate.

2. Responses to statutory consultation

- 2.1 At the end of the statutory consultation period only one response had been received. This response was from a resident of Sulham who objected to any reduction to the current speed limit and made the following comments:

- The A4 is a main trunk road which has been derestricted for decades. The council appear to be proposing a 50mph limit because of the proximity of junctions, and this will be used as a 'wedge' to make the whole of the A4 50mph.
- Considers that using the mean speeds as specified in Circular 01/2006 is incorrect and that the 85 percentile speeds should be used when setting speed limits.
- The outcome of a collision at 50mph is likely to be the same as that at 60mph.
- The council has not justified the reduction in terms of reduced injuries or mean speed.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 The A4 has not been a trunk road for over 40 years and the area fronting the A4 at Padworth has changed considerably in the last two decades. The speed limit has been reviewed taking into account the latest guidance from DfT, the number of recorded injury accidents and the results of recent traffic surveys.
- 3.2 The proposed 50mph speed limit covers the recent developments on the A4 and no further speed limit reductions on the A4 were considered appropriate by the task group. Therefore the proposed speed limit is not a wedge for to reduce the speed limit on the whole of the A4.
- 3.3 At the time of the speed limit review the three year injury accident record, to the end of July 2010, showed that there had been 28 accidents on the A4 between the two A340 roundabouts. These resulted in 4 serious and 33 slight injuries. In the latest three year period, to the end of December 2011 there have been 10 recorded injury accidents within the length of the proposed speed limit, which have resulted in 1 fatal, 3 serious and 11 slight injuries being received.
- 3.4 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. The 85th percentile speed is below that of the proposed speed limit and shows that a 50mph speed limit is appropriate for the length proposed.
- 3.5 Given the above it is considered that the objector was not fully aware of the issues and many of their concerns had already been taken into account by the task group when the speed limit was reviewed.
- 3.6 During the consultation of the draft report several members commented that they do not support a 50mph speed limit on the dual carriageway section. There seems to be some confusion as the national speed limit is to remain on the dual carriageway section. The extent of the proposed speed limit is shown on Plan No SLR/10/04/002A.
- 3.7 Councillor Woodhams as part of his consultation response was expecting to see comments from the Police. The emergency services are statutory constultees on any traffic regulation order and if they comment about the proposals then they are

included within the Individual Decision report. The Police are also part of the speed limit review task group which supported the introduction of the 50mph speed limit.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 That the proposed speed limit is introduced as advertised.
- 4.2 That the respondent to the statutory consultation be informed accordingly.

Appendices

Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment – Stage 1

APPENDIX A

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 April 2012
Owner of item being assessed:	Andrew Garratt, Principal Traffic & Road Safety Engineer
Name of assessor:	Andrew Garratt
Date of assessment:	5 April 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:		

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 April 2012