

TO: SWALE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD

DATE: 25 June 2007

SUBJECT: A251 FAVERSHAM TO CHALLOCK – SPEED
MANAGEMENT SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

BY: DIVISIONAL MANAGER – Mid Kent Division
Kent Highway Services

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report sets out the history of this proposal, the events leading to the publication of the Orders and the representations received.

Decision required: Extension of the proposed 40 mph speed limits would be contrary to national guidelines, local policies and our agreement with the Police that we only promote realistic and self-enforcing speed limits. Members are asked to recommend that:-

1. The speed limits are implemented as published;
2. The situation be monitored over a period of one year and if the new speed limits result in further reduction of the measured speed of vehicles, appropriate action is taken to reduce the speed limits further.

Introduction

1. This issue was the subject of a previous report to this Board and Members recommended that the speed limits of 30 mph and 50 mph be introduced within the villages and remainder of the route along the A251 respectively. However, the policy supported by the Highway Authority is that only speed limits that are self-enforcing are introduced. This is in line with national guidelines.
2. Evidence had shown that the appropriate speed limit within the villages was 40 mph. In order to resolve the issue it was referred to the Highways Advisory Board and Members resolved that no further action is taken in respect of the JTB recommendation and 40 mph limits be introduced within the villages.
3. A report to this Board in March 2007 informed Members of the recommendation made by the HAB and the resolution of the Cabinet Member for Highways, Waste and Environment. Subsequently the necessary Traffic Regulation Orders were published and the statutory

consultation process commenced on 2 May 2007. All local residents, and affected parish councils and local politicians were notified in writing in advance of the start of consultation period.

Discussion

4. Following the publication of the Order, 10 written representations were received. Of these four supported the proposals, five expressed general support but considered that further extensions of the proposed limits should be made and/or additional measures should be incorporated to help enforce the proposed speed limits and one objection was received.
5. The objection received was from Sell Wade Conservation Consultants who essentially supported the proposed speed limits reductions but objected because they felt that the proposed 40mph limits needed to be extended.
6. Prior to the start of the statutory consultation a Senior Officer met with representatives of Sheldwich, Badlesmere & Leaveland Parish Council and considered the proposals in detail. There were a number of points raised by the parish council and it was subsequently possible to address some of these prior to publication of the Order. These changes are listed in Appendix 1 of this report.
7. Following the publication of the Orders, further written communications were received from the Sheldwich, Badlesmere & Leaveland Parish Council dated 8 May and 6 June 2007 that should have been responded in accordance with our procedures. On becoming aware of this the Head of Transportation at Mid Kent Division personally contacted the parish council and expressed regret over the omission and offered to meet to discuss their concerns.
8. Whilst this fact is regrettable, the substance of the parish council's concerns regarding the published Orders have been fully considered as part of the consultation process. The changes the parish council wished to have included involved extending the proposed 40 mph limits. Such changes have not been possible to make based on the available evidence and would be contrary to the national guidelines and local policies on the setting of speed limits.
9. It is important to recognise that not only should the setting of speed limits conform to government guidelines and County Policy but they should also be supported by the Police authority. The County Council has an agreement with the Police Authority that all new speed limits should be realistic and self enforcing.
10. There is a weight of evidence which supports the proposals as published which has already been the subject of considerable political debate and having considered the representations received prior and during the Statutory consultation period it is important that the scheme is progressed as soon as possible to improve highway safety.

11. Scheme monitoring is an important stage following any scheme implementation. Once the A251 scheme is implemented it will be necessary to review its success by comparing the personal injury crash record and speed of traffic one year after completion. This review process will allow us to consider the need for any further changes to the scheme. This can include the consideration to extending the 40 mph limits as has been suggested by Sheldwich, Badlemere & Leaveland Parish Council and if the information collected supports such a change it can be put forward as a scheme bid in the following financial year.
12. The monitoring of traffic speed will also determine the potential location of the speed indicator devices that are essential part of the overall scheme proposal. This part of the scheme is included in the overall funding allocation for the scheme for expenditure in 2008/9.

Decision required

13. Extension of the proposed 40 mph speed limits would be contrary to national guidelines, local policies and our agreement with the Police that we only promote realistic and self-enforcing speed limits. Members are asked to recommend that:-
 1. The speed limits are implemented as published;
 2. The situation be monitored over a period of one year and if the new speed limits result in further reduction of the measured speed of vehicles, appropriate action is taken to reduce the speed limits further.

Contact Officer

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APPENDIX 1

A251 FAVERSHAM TO CHALLOCK SPEED MANAGEMENT SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

Plan Nos. 016551/31/1221 – 1226

Plan number	Location	Amendment	
All plans	All locations along A251 route	Amend derestricted signs to 50 mph	
1221	Hillbus Farm jct. Pested Lane	Install double white lines from a point 380 m north of Pested Lane to a point 250m south of Pested Lane	
1222	Badlesmere (south end)	Move terminal further south before bend	
1222	Badlesmere between terminals	Consider removing centre line through built up section	
1223	Badlesmere (north end)	Move terminal further north before bend	
1223	Junction Bagshill Road	Consider bringing 'give way' line forward to improve visibility	
1224	Sheldwich (north end)	Move terminal further north of junction with Plumford Road	
1224	Lees Court Road	Investigate speed limit reduction to 30 mph. Extent of limit incorporating side roads.	
1224/1225	North Street between terminals	Consider removing centre line through built up section	
1225	M2 junctions	Move 40 mph terminal further south to encompass M2 slip roads	
1225/1226	M2 junctions	Renew/replace carriageway markings defining running lanes/right turn lanes	
1225/1226	M2 slip road junction London bound	Regularise indiscriminate verge parking by provided marked bays on carriageway.	Junction give way may need amending to maintain visibility standards.

