

Agenda Item:

# Regulatory Committee



**Dorset County Council**



Date of Meeting	19 October 2017
<p><u>Local Member</u> Cllr Jill Haynes Member for Three Valleys</p> <p><u>Lead Officer</u> Mike Potter, Collision Reduction Team Manager, Dorset Highways</p>	
<b>Subject of Report</b>	<b>Proposed Speed Limit Reduction C12 Charminster</b>
Executive Summary	Following the consultation for the proposed change to the speed limit on the C12 at Charminster from 50mph to 40 mph an objection was received. This report considers the objection and whether the proposed speed limit change should be implemented.
Impact Assessment:	Equalities Impact Assessment:
	Use of Evidence:  Site investigations, traffic and collision data, primary consultation and support of Local Members, Parish Council and the Police.
	Budget:  The cost of making the Order is estimated at £8,900 inclusive of advertising charges.
	Risk Assessment:  Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the County Council's approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as: Current Risk: LOW

	Residual Risk: LOW
Other Implications	None
Recommendation	That having considered the objection received, Cabinet be recommended to approve the proposed new speed limit of 40mph for the C12.
Reason for Recommendation	The proposals will regulate or reduce the speed of vehicles to a level which drivers can readily meet the general hazards which may be expected on this road. Also to fulfil our obligation to review speed limits in light of changes in DFT (Department for Transport) guidance “setting local speed limits”.
Appendices	Appendix 1 – Location plan of the proposed speed reduction from 50mph to 40mph.
Background Papers	<p>The letters of response are available in the Members Room prior to the meeting.</p> <p>Consultation responses from the District and Parish Councils, Dorset Police and the local County Councillors are held on file in the Environment and the Economy Directorate.</p>
Report Originator and Contact	<p>Name: Mike Potter  Collision Reduction Team Manager, Dorset Highways  Tel: 01305 221767  Email: m.potter@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p>



## 1 Background

- 1.1 The C12 between Lower Burton and Charminster currently has a speed limit of 50mph. There are multiple entrances and side roads accessing the stretch of road. In recent years the traffic has increased on this road due to the development at Charlton Down and there have been a number of injury collisions on this route.
- 1.2 When the proposals were advertised 16 letters of support and one objection were received.

## 2 Information

- 2.1 The existing speed limit for the stretch of road in question is 50mph. County Council officers propose that a 40mph speed limit should be applied to the stretch of road, as shown in drawing in Appendix 1. The length of the 40mph limit would be approximately 0.8 of a mile.
- 2.2 It is felt that the use, length and layout of this section of the C12 meets with Department for Transport guidance adopted by the County Council as Policy for a 40mph speed limit.
- 2.3 Speed survey data has been reviewed and the mean average and 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds recorded were close to what would be considered reasonable for the speed limit to be reduced to 40mph limit as per DfT guidance which the County Council adopts as policy.

A speed survey was conducted between 21 July and 27 July 2017. Table 1 shows the recorded speeds for an average 24 hour period for each direction; the survey took place on the C12 between the junctions with Charlotte Close and Burn View. This site was selected as it is where traffic is most often free flowing.

**Table 1 – Speed survey results for existing 50mph limit on the C12:**

	85th%ile*	Mean avg.
Eastbound	45mph	39mph
Westbound	46mph	40mph
All directions	45mph	39mph

\*Speed at which 85% of vehicles were travel at or below.

## 3 Law

- 3.1 Section 84 (1) and (2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 allow the County Council to make an Order prohibiting the driving of motor vehicles on the road(s) at a speed exceeding that specified in the order.

## 4 Consultation

- 4.1 Under Dorset County Council’s procedure, primary consultation was carried out on the proposed scheme and support was received from the Local Member, West Dorset District Council, Charminster Parish Council and the Police. The proposal was then advertised and 16 letters in support and one objection were received.

## **5 Objection received**

- 5.1 The main points of the one objection received are as follows – “Current mean vehicle speeds as demonstrated by a recent speed survey are below the new limit being proposed. As such it is clearly both unnecessary and misuse of DCC’s limited resources. The support expressed by the elected member and the Parish Council cannot, due to the lack of evidence available, be based on anything other than personal feelings and opinion, rather than evidenced facts. Those opinions are expressed by people who, whilst having the very best of intentions, have no practical experience of, or more importantly any formal qualification of any kind in Road Safety Matters. The reasons for their support can only therefore be based on personal views rather than evidence”.
- 5.2 The main points mentioned in the 16 letters of support were – “The proposal would improve safety where sightlines are poor and pedestrians crossing to the footpaths and enable the local speed watch team to monitor speeds. Significant increase in the traffic on this road and the current speed limit is too fast given the number of turnings off the road and the proximity of the well-used footway. Traffic speeding from Sherborne/Charlton Down causes problems”.
- 5.3 A 40mph limit on this section of the C12 is considered necessary and justifiable by officers as it meets with the criteria set out in DfT guidance which the County Council adopts as its speed limit policy.
- 5.4 The results of the traffic survey outlined earlier in the report show that the majority of drivers using this section of the C12 are traveling close to 40mph. A 40mph limit on this section of road would serve to reinforce the typical speeds to drivers currently choosing to travel notably faster than the norm.
- 5.5 DfT guidance states that changes to speed limits should be a last resort with speed management measures implemented as a primary measure. Speed management measures such as warning signs and markings have been exhausted on this section of the C12 and collisions have continued to occur at conflict points after their installation. This provides further justification for proposing to reduce the speed limit to 40mph.

## **6 Conclusion**

- 6.1 The Department of Transport stated in their circular 01/2013 “Setting local speed limits, the following; “There is clear evidence of the effect of reducing traffic speeds on the reduction of collisions and casualties, as collision frequency is lower at lower speeds and where collisions do occur, there is a lower risk of fatal injury at lower speeds”.
- 6.2 Therefore, while we cannot say 100% that the road in question will be safer, it would be reasonable to suggest that there is the evidence to indicate that it will be if the speed limit were reduced to 40mph. Within the stretch of road in question there are farms and businesses which the County Council feel would benefit from a reduced speed limit.
- 6.3 Having considered the objection it is proposed that the Regulatory Committee recommend that Cabinet approve the proposal.

**Andrew Martin**

Service Director Highways October 2017