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# County Council

## Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	21 July 2016
Officer	Chief Executive and Director for Environment and Economy
<b>Subject of Report</b>	<b>Procedure for Petitions - Petition entitled ‘Campaign 40’</b>
Executive Summary	<p>A petition has been received (in accordance with the County Council’s published petitions scheme) in relation to reducing the speed limit on the A35, Christchurch at Roeshot Hill from national (60mph) to 40mph and on Lyndhurst Road from 40mph to 30mph.</p> <p>The scheme provides that any petitions that are supported by 1,000 or more signatories shall be scheduled for a debate at the next meeting of the full County Council and that the petitioner shall be given an opportunity to speak to the meeting as a deputation.</p> <p>It is for the Council to decide how to respond to the petition at this meeting.</p>
Impact Assessment:	<p>Equalities Impact Assessment:</p> <p>Not applicable</p>
	<p>Use of Evidence:</p> <p>Latest available five years’ worth of road traffic collision data (January 2011 to December 2015)</p>
	<p>Budget:</p> <p>The cost of implementing the requested 40mph limit would likely be between £8,000 and £15,000 – costs are for context only and do not represent actual costs, costs include officer time and costs</p>

Procedure for Petitions – Petition entitled ‘Campaign 40’

	<p>of physical signing as well as costs associated with the legal process.</p> <p>The cost of speed management measures such as advanced warning signs and road markings would cost from £1,000 upwards depending upon works required.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Risk Assessment:</b></p> <p>There is a potential for the County Council’s reputation to be adversely effected.</p> <p>A large housing development is proposed for land adjacent to the section of the A35 in question which includes extensive changes to the highway. The cost of these highway changes will be met in full by the developer.</p> <p>If the County Council were to agree to significant highway alterations at this section of the A35 it would likely be undone or rendered redundant in the not too distant future.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Other Implications:</b></p> <p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>The Full Council is invited to note receipt of this petition.</p>
<p>Reason for Recommendation</p>	<p>In order to comply with the County Council’s published scheme for responding to petitions and so as to enable local people to connect with local elected decision makers.</p>
<p>Appendices</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Site detail plan – Roeshot Hill</li> <li>2. Site detail plan – Lyndhurst Road</li> <li>3. Road traffic collision overview</li> <li>4. Copy of full ‘Campaign 40’ petition</li> <li>5. Dorset County Council’s Speed Limit Policy</li> </ol>
<p>Background Papers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dorset County Council Petitions Scheme</li> <li>• Department for Transport Circular 01/2013 – Setting Local Speed Limits</li> </ul>
<p>Officer Contact</p>	<p>Name: Michael Potter          Tel: 01305 221767          Email: m.potter@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p>

## **1. Background to the Petition Scheme**

- 1.1 The petition provisions in the Local Democracy Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 aim to reinvigorate local democracy by ensuring that all local authorities adopt schemes giving local people better opportunities to connect with local decision makers.
- 1.2 The County Council’s Petitions Scheme (based on the national model) was adopted on 29 April 2010 and came into effect on 15 June 2010. The law requires the council to respond to petitions organised and supported by people who live, work or study in Dorset.
- 1.3 If a petition contains more than 1,000 signatures the Scheme requires that it will be debated by the full Council. The petition organiser will be given ten minutes to present the petition as a deputation at the meeting and the petition will then be discussed by councillors for a maximum of 15 minutes.
- 1.4 Where the issue is one on which the Cabinet is required to make the final decision, the Council may decide whether to make recommendations to inform that decision.

## **2. Petition – Campaign 40**

- 2.1 The County Council received a petition organised by Wendy Hill on 17 March 2016. This reads as follows:-

*My name is Wendy Hill, I started this campaign November 2015 because of the first three accidents that happened last year, the residents and manager from The Toby Carvery felt something had to be done about the speed and how people drive along this stretch of the A35. Local business and residents have had a petition board with their support we have collected signatures from the public who feel the same way that something needs to be [done] about Lyndhurst Road & Roeshot Hill.*

*The number of accidents since June 2015 were:-*

1. *15<sup>th</sup> June which myself and my sister had to be cut free from our vehicle by fire fighters the emergency services all attended.*
2. *8<sup>th</sup> July a lady was involved in a head on collision which the air ambulance was needed because of her serious injuries.*
3. *August when a collision happened just outside the toby carvery in which six people were hurt and the air ambulance was needed for one of the children involved.*
4. *September was a member of staff from toby carvery going to work at 6.30am started to turn in to the car park and was hit by a car into their big sign and was taken to hospital.*
5. *December when a young man was knocked of his bicycle by a van early morning and the air ambulance was need because of his serious injuries.*

## Procedure for Petitions – Petition entitled ‘Campaign 40’

6. *One night, a driver went into the sign at the Toby Carvery as a result of speeding.*

*The A35 is a very busy road which sees all types of vehicles using it ranging from cars, vans, tractors, motor bikes, coaches and very large sand ballast lorries and vehicles carrying skips.*

*We have seen a temporary increased usage of this road recently because of road works on the Spur Road. Many heavy goods vehicles are using this route and an increase volume of general traffic.*

*Not all but many motorists travelling downward of Roeshot Hill are travelling at such high speeds, already exceeding the current speed limit, that when they approach Lyndhurst Road they just cannot slowdown in time.*

*We are currently waiting an updated report of accident statistic from Dorset Police Freedom of Information Office. The statistics we currently have are only up to 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015.*

*These accidents have an enormous impact on local residents and business on Lyndhurst Road. Please see the attached letter from one of those businesses – Toby Carvery – and the impact it has on them.*

The letter from Toby Carvery as well as additional information provided in the petition is included within the copy of the full ‘Campaign 40’ petition at Appendix 4.

- 2.2 Christchurch Borough Council was first asked to comment on this petition on 23 March 2016 and was chased for comment on 6 June 2016; no formal response has been received to date.
- 2.3 As this petition contains more than 1,000 signatures, the County Council is required to discuss this for a maximum of 15 minutes in accordance with the Petitions Scheme.
- 2.4 This debate should conclude with a decision as to how to respond to the petition. This may include:
- taking the action requested in the petition
  - holding an inquiry into the matter
  - undertaking research into the matter
  - holding a public meeting
  - holding a consultation
  - holding a meeting with petitioners
  - referring the petition for consideration by the council’s audit and scrutiny committee
  - calling a referendum
  - writing to the petition organiser setting out our views about the request in the petition
- 2.5 Alternatively, the Committee may determine a combination of the options above, or decide on another course of action as appropriate.

### 3. Context

## Procedure for Petitions – Petition entitled ‘Campaign 40’

- 3.1 The petition contains 1,273 signatures from within the County of Dorset.
- 3.2 The A35 at Roeshot Hill is covered by the national speed limit (60mph) and continues into Hampshire until the limit reduces to 40mph at ‘Hinton’, a total distance of approximately one mile. Appendix 1 shows the section of the A35 at Roeshot Hill including details of the existing layout, signing and lining.
- 3.3
  - (a) The Roeshot Hill section of the A35 is one of the main roads into Christchurch from the east, no recent traffic survey data is available for this section of the A35.
  - (b) The Roeshot Hill section of the A35 has three running lanes; two lanes for northbound traffic and one lane for southbound traffic. The two lane section on Roeshot Hill covers the incline.
  - (c) A system of double white lines covers the length of the overtaking lane for northbound traffic, prohibiting drivers using the southbound lane to overtake travelling northbound.
  - (d) There are double white lines covering most of the southbound lane prohibiting drivers from using the northbound lanes to overtake whilst travelling southbound (towards Christchurch). This double white line becomes a broken white line at a point when forward visibility increases to a point that guidelines suggest a double white line is not warranted. This broken white line allows drivers travelling southbound to overtake using the northbound overtaking lane.
  - (e) The northbound section of the A35 at Roeshot Hill has signs in place warning drivers that the overtaking lane is ending. There are three signs in total for northbound traffic, one 100yards in advance on the nearside verge and two at the point at which the overtaking lane begins to narrow into one lane (one on the nearside and one on the offside verge).
  - (f) Vegetation close to the advanced warning signs at the point the overtaking lane begins to narrow into one lane is thick and currently limits forward visibility of the sign on the nearside verge.
  - (g) Red coloured surfacing is in place throughout the hatched area at the end of the overtaking lane. This is to enhance the message to drivers that the carriageway reduces from two lanes to one.
  - (h) There are three keep left arrows painted on the road surface in the northbound overtaking lane in order to enhance the message that the carriageway soon reduces to one lane.
- 3.4
  - (a) The A35 at Roeshot Hill is treated as a rural road; this is due to the nature of this section of road.
  - (b) The Circular 01/2013 ‘Setting Local Speed Limits’ sets out guidelines for the general approach to rural speed limit management:

**Table 1**

<b>Speed limit (mph)</b>	<b>Where limit should apply:</b>
60	Recommended for most high quality strategic A and B roads with few bends, junction or accesses.
50	Should be considered for lower quality A and B roads that may have a relatively high number of bends, junctions or accesses.  Can also be considered where mean speeds are below 50mph, so lower limit does not interfere with the traffic flow.
40	Should be considered where there are many bends, junctions or access, substantial development, a strong environmental or landscape reason, or where there are considerable numbers of vulnerable road users.

- (c) The information provided in Table 1 shows that the current national limit (60mph) that covers the Roeshot Hill section of the A35 is likely to be appropriate.
- 3.5
- (a) The A35, Lyndhurst Road has a speed limit of 40mph which begins close to the access to the Toby Carvery, Public House. The 40mph limit changes at the point where the nature of the road changes.
  - (b) There are private properties and businesses that have access onto Lyndhurst Road. These are set back from the carriageway and on one side of the road only. The existing development is not felt enough to consider this section of the A35 as ‘built-up’ from a speed limit management point of view.
  - (c) Non-motorised users, i.e. pedestrians and cyclists are catered for with a segregated footway/cycleway and there is a pelican crossing north of roundabout to Supermarket and Garden Centre.
  - (d) There is an access for an allotment site on the opposite side to the private properties and businesses.
  - (e) Appendix 2 shows the section of the A35, Lyndhurst Road covered by a 40mph limit including details of the existing layout, signing and lining.
- 3.6
- (a) The 40mph section at Lyndhurst Road is treated as urban.
  - (b) The Circular 01/2013 ‘Setting Local Speed Limits’ sets out guidelines for the general approach to urban speed limit management:

**Table 2**

Speed limit (mph)	Where limit should apply:
20 (including 20 mph zone)	In streets that are primarily residential and in other town or city streets where pedestrian and cyclist movements are high, such as around schools, shops, markets, playgrounds and other areas, where motor vehicle movement is not the primary function.
30	In other built-up areas (where motor vehicle movement is deemed more important), with development on both sides of the road.
40	On higher quality suburban roads or those on the outskirts of urban areas where there is little development, with few cyclists, pedestrians or equestrians. On roads with good width and layout, parking and waiting restrictions in operation, and buildings set back from the road. On roads that, wherever possible, cater for the needs of non-motorised users through segregation of road space, and have adequate footways and crossing places.
50	On dual carriageway ring or radial routes or bypasses that have become partially built up, with little or no roadside development.

- (c) The information provided in Table 2 shows that the current 40mph limit that covers the Lyndhurst Road section of the A35 is likely to be appropriate as the road layout and use is best represented by the description of a 40mph limit in an urban setting.
- 3.7 (a) The Department for Transport’s (DfT) Circular 01/2013 ‘Setting Local Speed Limits’ states that speed management measures should be considered before a reduction in speed limit.
- (b) This applies to both urban and rural roads. Measures can include advanced warning signs or lining that raise awareness to any hazards or to a change in situation such as a reduced speed limit.
- 3.8 The County Council’s speed limit policy which reflects DfT guidance states that ‘Speed limits should be evidence led, self-explaining and encourage self-compliance.’

## Procedure for Petitions – Petition entitled ‘Campaign 40’

- 3.9 As well as concerns with traffic speed the petition raises concerns with overtaking. Overtaking is a manoeuvre often undertaken by drivers who feel the vehicle ahead is travelling ‘too slow’. If speed limits are set artificially low, i.e. not self-explaining or does not encourage self-compliance then it is likely that rates of overtaking would increase.
- 3.10 (a) A 40mph limit covering Roeshot Hill and a reduction in the existing 40mph speed limit on Lyndhurst Road to 30mph would likely require very regular enforcement to encourage compliance.
- (b) The DfT Circular 01/2013 ‘Setting Local Speed Limits’ also states that “there should be no expectation on the police to provide additional enforcement to ensure compliance with a new limit beyond their routine activity, unless this has been explicitly agreed.”
- 3.11 (a) Validated collision data has recently been received from Dorset Police for 2015. Data for 2016 is yet to be validated.
- (b) Due to IT issues experienced at Dorset Police there have been significant delays in releasing detailed collision data to the County Council. Whilst the IT issues have now been resolved there is a backlog of data to be validated.
- (c) Without these issues it would be reasonable to have expected receipt of detailed collision data up to and including April 2016.
- 3.12 (a) It is standard practice to analyse the latest available five years’ worth of collision data when identifying and investigating safety problems/concerns.
- (b) At Roeshot Hill, between January 2011 and December 2015, there were a total of five collisions (one fatal, two serious and two slight).
- (c) One collision is too many, however taking into account the strategic function of this section of ‘A’ road and the not insignificant levels of traffic flow the rate of collisions is relatively speaking, low.
- (d) From the available data and those noted by Ms Hill in the petition it would seem that there has been a recent increase. In such cases the first consideration is the condition of the existing measures and whether steps need to be taken to maintain/update what measures are already in place.
- (e) The details of the four collisions at Roeshot Hill show a variety of contributory factors and circumstances. There is an element of human error in all collisions. A summary of these collisions including a plot showing the location of each collision can be found at Appendix 3.
- 3.13 (a) At the 40mph section of Lyndhurst Road that the petition is asking to reduce to 30mph, there was a total of 14 collisions (one serious and 13 slight) – latest available five years (January 2011 to December 2015).
- (b) The 14 collisions are spread across this section of the A35, Lyndhurst Road with no one single trend/pattern emerging that would suggest a reduction in the speed limit would be warranted. The detail of the 14 collisions shows a wide variety of contributory factors and circumstances; human error was the main factor in all collisions.



## Procedure for Petitions – Petition entitled ‘Campaign 40’

- 3.14 Based on the available evidence, it is unlikely that a reduced speed limit at either Roeshot Hill or Lyndhurst Road would have prevented any of the collisions; human error was the overriding factor in each collision. Appendix 3 provides an overview of the circumstance of each collisions as well as a plot showing the location of each collision.
- 3.15 (a) Land adjacent to Roeshot Hill is subject to planning permission being granted for the building of up to 950 homes. The proposed development site is identified for a strategic housing allocation under Policy CN1 of Christchurch Borough Council’s Core Strategy (adopted April 2014).
- (b) Included within these development plans are extensive changes to the A35. The plans include the removal of the overtaking lane for northbound traffic on Roeshot Hill and a new roundabout located close to the current start of the overtaking lane. (c) The existing 40mph limit on Lyndhurst road would be extended to include Roeshot Hill as part of these works.
- (d) There are also plans for the installation of new pedestrian crossing points between the proposed new roundabout at Roeshot Hill and to the south on Lyndhurst Road.
- (e) All the above mentioned measures would act as traffic calming. All costs of these works would be met by the developer.
- (f) The development at Roeshot Hill and its supporting highway related works offers the best way to fundamentally change the way traffic uses Roeshot Hill. However, it is not clear when construction of the proposed housing development and supporting highway changes will commence.
- 3.16 (a) In summary, the current layout of the A35 at Roeshot Hill and the 40mph section at Lyndhurst Road do not lend themselves to a reduced speed limit and would go against the County Council’s speed limit policy; a copy of the speed limit policy document is at Appendix 5.
- (b) Reducing the speed limit to 40mph at Roeshot Hill would likely result in greater conflict between drivers as a 40mph limit would not likely be seen as reasonable. Instances of overtaking would likely increase as would tailgating. Reducing the limit to 40mph could result in greater concerns.
- (c) Reducing the existing 40mph speed limit on Lyndhurst Road to 30mph would likely have an adverse effect on the existing situation for similar reasons to Roeshot Hill. Rates of overtaking and tailgating would likely increase with many drivers feeling a 30mph limit is unreasonably low. Reducing the speed limit to 30mph on the A35, Lyndhurst Road could result in greater concerns.
- (d) The Department for Transport’s (DfT) Circular 01/2013 ‘Setting Local Speed Limits’ states that speed management measures should be considered before a reduction in speed limit.
- (e) This applies to both urban and rural roads. Measures can include advanced warning signs or lining that raise awareness to any hazards or to a change in situation such as a reduced speed limit.
- (f) Although there is no date set for when the housing development at Roeshot Hill and connected highways works will commence, it is these works that will

Procedure for Petitions – Petition entitled ‘Campaign 40’

have the greatest and most sustainable impact on traffic speeds on these two sections of the A35 and would be completed at the cost of the developer.

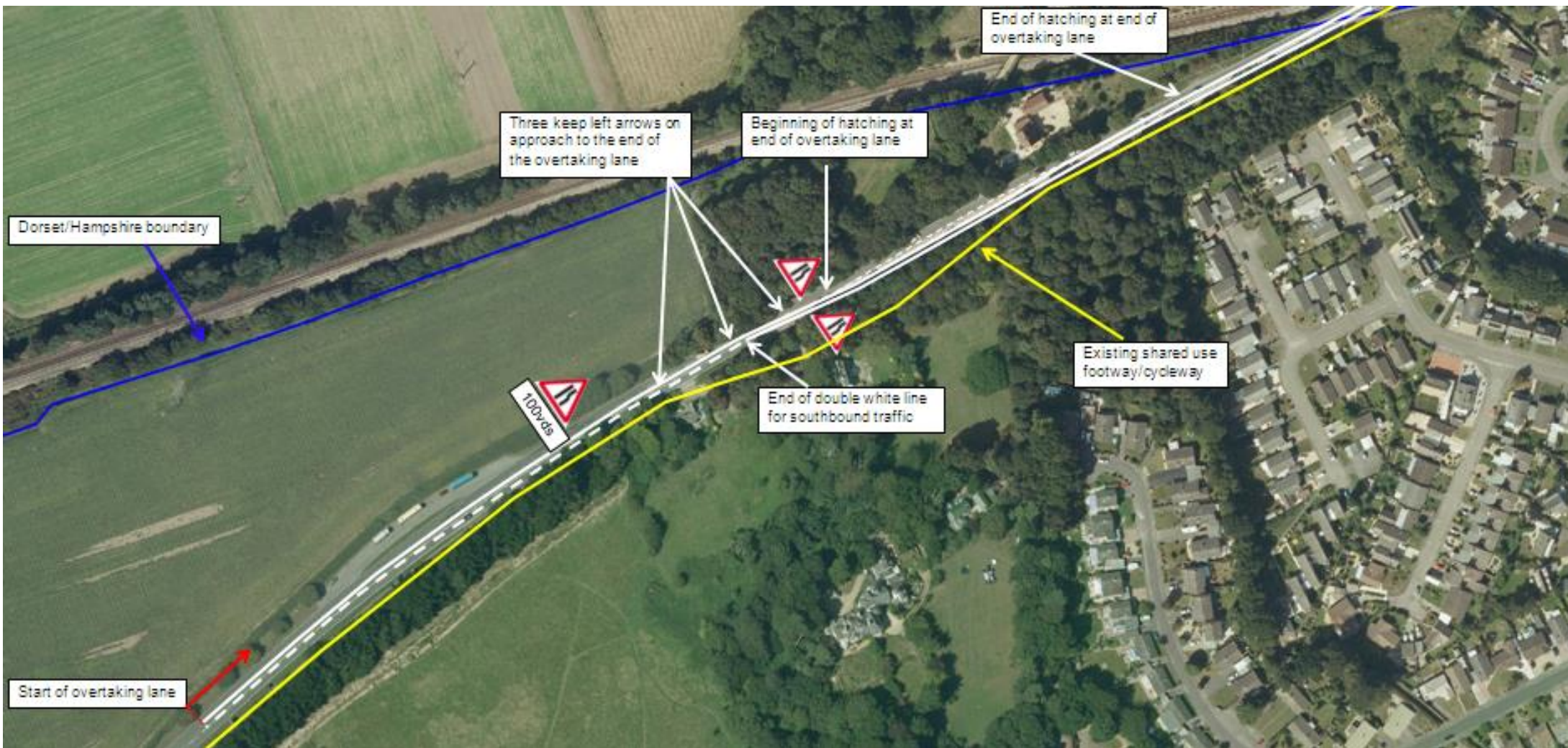
- 3.17 Committee are minded to consider the petition and evidence in conjunction with the context before making a decision as to a way forward, examples of which are shown in paragraph 2.4.

**Mike Harries**

**Director for Environment and Economy**

July 2016

Appendix 1 – Site detail – Roeshot Hill





Appendix 2 – Site detail – Lyndhurst Road



Procedure for Petitions – Petition entitled ‘Campaign 40’

**Appendix 3** – Collision data overview – latest available five years (January 2011 to December 2015)

Roeshot Hill:

Total of five road traffic collisions – one fatal (July 2011), two serious (July 2015 and November 2015) and two slight (February 2012 and September 2015)

For legal reasons details for each collision cannot be identified but a summary of all collisions can be provided:

- Cyclist injured when turning across path of vehicle travelling from behind
- Vehicle exiting side road turned across path of motorcycle on main road
- Northbound vehicle swerved to avoid another northbound vehicle into the path of southbound vehicle
- Vehicle exiting side road turned across path of motorcycle on main road
- Vehicle loses control whilst overtaking



**Appendix 3 continued** – Collision data overview – latest available five years (January 2011 to December 2015)

Plot showing location of collisions at Roeshot Hill:



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Procedure for Petitions – Petition entitled ‘Campaign 40’

**Appenix 3 continued** - Collision data overview – latest available five years (January 2011 to December 2015)

Lyndhurst Road:

Total of 14 road traffic collisions – one serious (August 2015) and 13 slight (April, May and June 2011, November and December 2012, April, June, November and December 2013, January and May 2014 and June and September 2015).

For legal reasons details for each collision cannot be identified but a summary of all collisions can be provided:


- Mobility scooter crossed at pelican crossing when signal for road traffic was green
- Vehicle swerved into oncoming traffic for unknown reason
- Rear end shunt in queuing traffic
- Rear end shunt into vehicle waiting to turn right
- Rear end shunt due to sudden braking
- Rear end shunt in queuing traffic
- Rear end shunt in queuing traffic at roundabout
- Driver suffered medical episode at wheel
- Vehicle turned right across path of oncoming vehicle
- Rear end shunt in queuing traffic
- Rear end shunt into vehicle waiting to turn right
- Rear end shunt in queuing traffic at roundabout



**Appendix 3 continued** – Collision data overview – latest available five years (January 2011 to December 2015)

Plot showing location of collisions at Lyndhurst Road:



 <b>Dorset County Council</b>	A35, Christchurch Lyndhurst Road and Roeshott Hill	Crown Copyright © Crown Copyright Crown copyright. All rights reserved Dorset County Council Licence No. LA100019790 2016		
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