

Petitions Panel

Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	Tuesday 6 November 2018
Officer	Michael Potter, Collison Reduction Team Manager
Subject of Report	Procedure for Petitions – Petition entitled – To reduce the speed limit on Blandford Road, Corfe Mullen from 60mph to 30mph
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 B3074 Blandford Road, Corfe Mullen. The petition states:</p> <p><i>We the undersigned would like to ask DCC to reduce the speed limit of the Blandford Road at the entrance to the Village from 60mph to 30mph.</i></p> <p><i>This stretch of road is used extensively by horses and also cyclists. The road is narrow and has bends, with high hedges, which reduce visibility for a car driver. Fields along the side of the road are used to graze horses and it is very dangerous to bring these horses in and out from the fields. The situation has become much worse recently, since the wide use of SatNav equipment which shows this rural road to be a short cut to Poole and beyond. This road should not be a through road. Drivers who have no knowledge of Corfe Mullen are encouraged through the village.</i></p>
Impact Assessment: <i>Please refer to the protocol for writing reports.</i>	<p>Equalities Impact Assessment:</p> <p>Not applicable</p>
	<p>Use of Evidence:</p> <p>Stats 19 Road Traffic Collision Data Traffic survey data</p>
	<p>Budget:</p> <p>Cost of speed limit circa £3500 including signing and statutory Traffic Regulation Order process costs</p>
	<p>Risk Assessment:</p> <p>Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the</p>

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	<p>County Council's approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as:</p> <p>Current Risk: LOW Residual Risk LOW</p>
	<p>Other Implications:</p> <p>Not applicable</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>The Panel is invited to note the receipt of this petition and decide how to respond to it.</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>	<p>Appendix A – Copy of petition Appendix B – Plan showing extent of B3074 in question and existing signing Appendix C – Speed limit policy document</p>
<p>Background Papers</p>	<p>Dorset County Council Petitions Scheme Department for Transport circular 01/2013 – Setting Local Speed Limits</p>
<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 County Council's Petitions Scheme was adopted on 29 April 2010 and came into effect on 15 June 2010. The Scheme was subsequently updated by the County Council on 21 July 2016 and 15 February 2018.
- 1.2 If a petition is supported by 50 or more signatories then it will be dealt with by a small customer focussed panel. If a petition is supported by 4,250 or more signatories it will be scheduled for a debate at the next meeting of the full County Council.
- 1.3 This petition contains 63 signatories.

2. Petition – To reduce the speed limit on Blandford Road, Corfe Mullen from 60mph to 30mph

- 2.1 The County Council received a petition organised by Miss Hannah Yelland on 9 September 2018. This reads as follows:

We the undersigned would like to ask DCC to reduce the speed limit of the Blandford Road at the entrance to the Village from 60mph to 30mph.

This stretch of road is used extensively by horses and also cyclists. The road is narrow and has bends, with high hedges, which reduce visibility for a car driver. Fields along the side of the road are used to graze horses and it is very dangerous to bring these horses in and out from the fields. The situation has become much worse recently, since the wide use of SatNav equipment which shows this rural road to be a short cut to Poole and beyond. This road should not be a through road. Drivers who have no knowledge of Corfe Mullen are encouraged through the village.

- 2.2 Corfe Mullen Parish Council is supportive of the request to reduce the speed limit on B3074 Blandford Road from national (60mph) to 30mph.
- 2.3 As this petition contains more than 50 signatures, the Panel are invited to note and discuss this.
- 2.4 This discussion should conclude with a decision as to how to respond to the petition. This may include one or more of the following:
 - taking the action requested in the petition
 - considering the petition at a council meeting
 - holding an inquiry into the matter
 - undertaking research into the matter
 - holding a public meeting
 - holding a consultation
 - referring the petition for consideration by the council's audit and governance committee

- calling a referendum
- writing to the petition organiser setting out our views about the request in the petition.

2.5 Alternatively, the Panel may determine a combination of the options above, or decide on another course of action as appropriate.

3. Context

3.1 The B3074 Blandford Road leads to/from Corfe Mullen and the A31 Trunk Road in East Dorset.

3.2 The section of the B3074 in question is approximately half a mile in length, from its junction with the A31 to the exiting 30mph limit terminal.

3.3 A plan showing the location and extent of the B3074 including existing signing can be found at Appendix B.

3.4 The nature of the section of the B3074 in question is predominantly rural in nature before the existing 30mph limit terminal where the nature of the road becomes more urban/built up in nature throughout.

3.5 The County Council adopts Department for Transport (DfT) speed limit guidance as policy, with DfT circular 01/2013 Setting Local Speed Limits. Key points to consider in the underlying principle of local speed limits are set out below in paragraphs 3.6 to 3.12.

3.6 The Highways Agency is responsible for determining speed limits on the trunk road network. Local traffic authorities are responsible for determining speed limits on the local road network.

3.7 It is important that traffic authorities and police forces work closely together in determining, or considering, any changes to speed limits.

3.8 The full range of speed management measures should always be considered before a new speed limit is introduced.

3.9 The underlying aim should be to achieve a 'safe' distribution of speeds. The key factors that should be taken into account in any decisions on local speed limits are:

- **History of collisions;**
- **Road geometry and engineering;**
- **Road function;**
- **Composition of road users** (including existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users);
- **Existing traffic speeds;** and
- **Road environment.**

- 3.10 While these factors need to be considered for all road types, they may be weighted differently in urban and rural areas. The impact on community and environmental outcomes should also be considered.
- 3.11 The minimum length of a speed limit should generally be not less than 600 metres to avoid too many changes of speed limit along the route.
- 3.12 Speed limits should not be used to attempt to solve the problem of isolated hazards, such as a single road junction or reduced forward visibility, e.g. at a bend.
- 3.13 Table 1 shows DfT explanation of speed limits for rural single carriageway roads with a predominant motor traffic flow function.

Table 1 – Speed limits for rural single carriageway roads with a predominant motor traffic flow function.

Speed limit (mph)	Where speed limit should be considered:
60	Recommended for most high quality strategic A and B roads with few bends, junctions 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 traffic flow.
40	Should be considered where there are bends, junctions or accesses, substantial development, a strong environmental or landscape reason, or where there are considerable numbers of vulnerable road users

- 3.14 DfT’s Setting Local Speed Limits circular 01/2013 includes a definition of 30mph speed limits for both rural and urban areas.
- 3.15 An urban 30mph speed limit should apply in built up areas (where motor vehicle movement is deemed more important), with development on both sides of the road.
- 3.16 The section of the B3074 in questions does not meet the DfT definition of an urban 30mph limit
- 3.17 A rural 30mph limit is typically associated with a village. DfT definition of a village for the purposes of applying a 30mph speed limit is:
 - 20 or more houses (on one or both sides of the road); and
 - A minimum length of 600 metres.
- 3.18 The criteria above should give adequate visual messages to drivers to reduce their speed.

- 3.19 It is felt that the section of the B3074 in question does not meet the DfT definition of a rural 30mph speed limit.
- 3.20 In some circumstances it might be appropriate to consider an intermediate speed limit of 40mph prior to the 30mph terminal speed limit signs at the entrance to a village.
- 3.21 Table 2 below shows the mean average and 85th percentile speed recorded during a traffic survey carried out on the B3074 in June/July 2016.

Table 2 – Traffic survey results on the B3074, 16 June to 6 July 2016

B3074 - 16 June to 6 July 2018			
	Mean avg.	85th%ile	Avg. daily traffic flow
Westbound	38.1mph	44mph	1314
Eastbound	35.5mph	39.7mph	1275
Both directions	36.6mph	42.7mph	2589

- 3.22 Mean speed and 85th percentile speed (the speed at or below which 85% of vehicles are travelling) are most commonly used measures of actual traffic speed. Traffic authorities should continue to routinely collect and assess both, but mean speeds should be used as the basis for determining local speed limits.
- 3.23 The aim for local speed limits should be to align the speed limit to the conditions of the road and road environment.
- 3.24 The results of the traffic survey and DfT guidance would suggest that a 40mph limit could be considered for the section of the B3074 in question.
- 3.25 It is important to note that there are currently over 100 outstanding Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) with budget and resource available to process in the region of 10 requests per year.
- 3.26 The TRO programme for 2018/19 and 2019/20 has been agreed.
- 3.27 It is not likely that a speed limit reduction on this section of the B3074 would rank highly compared to other priorities and therefore no commitment can be made on when a speed limit reduction TRO would be processed.
- 3.28 The DfT state that speed management measures should always be considered before a new speed limit is introduced. Hazard warning

signing and carriageway markings are considered as speed management measures.

3.29 It is understood that a review of hazard warning signing and lining has not taken place recently on the section of the B3074 in question.

4.0 Next Steps

4.1 The Panel is invited to note the receipt of this petition and decide how to respond to it, possible options are available in paragraph 2.3.

Matthew Piles
Service Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Environment
November 2018