



20mph Policy

A guide to principles, criteria, and process

Purpose

This document sets out the background to such limits and the criteria that the Council will use to consider whether to introduce such limits and how potential schemes would be prioritised across the county.

The document outlines the context and process by which requests for 20mph limits or zones are assessed and, where applicable, prioritised.

Dorset Council will consider the introduction of more 20 mph limits and zones, over time, in urban areas and village streets that are primarily residential, to ensure greater safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

Dorset Council's highways service will proactively identify and install 20mph schemes as part of highway improvement schemes such as town/village realm enhancements.

Dorset Council will also actively promote the installation of 20mph schemes, where appropriate, on new residential developments. Such developments have long been designed in such a way to encourage speeds at or below 20mph. Where practical, the extent of a 20mph scheme associated with a new development should look to include any adjoining residential areas to ensure consistency in a residential area.

Background

The Department for Transport (DfT) has encouraged highway authorities to introduce 20mph limits in urban areas and village streets that are primarily residential.

For speed limit changes to be considered by Dorset Council a formal request should be received from either the local Dorset Ward Member and/or the town/parish council.

DfT criteria underpins all speed limit reduction requests. The main reference document is [DfT circular 01/2013 'Setting Local Speed Limits'](#).

Traffic authorities can, over time, introduce 20mph speed limits or zones on major streets where there are, or could be a significant number of journeys on foot or by bike. Associated benefits of such limits/zones should outweigh any associated disadvantage of longer journey times for motorised traffic.

This is in addition to residential streets in cities, towns and villages, particularly where the streets are being used by people on foot and on bicycles, there is community support, and the characteristics of the street are suitable.

Where they do so, general compliance needs to be achievable without an excessive reliance on enforcement.

The DfT state that the standard speed limit in urban areas is 30 mph, which represents a balance between mobility and safety factors. However, for residential streets and other town and city streets with high pedestrian and cyclist movement, local traffic authorities should consider the use of 20 mph schemes.

It may also be appropriate to consider 20 mph limits or zones in built-up village streets which are primarily residential in nature, or where pedestrian and cyclist movements

are high. Such limits should not, however, be considered on roads with a strategic function or where the movement of motor vehicles is the primary function.

Assessment criteria for consideration of potential 20mph schemes

DfT's criteria for setting speed limits is a key consideration when reviewing all speed limit reduction requests.

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
- road environment

The Council will evaluate 20mph schemes on a location by location basis. As a guide locations can be considered for 20mph schemes when all three of the following criteria apply:

A. they are in towns or villages where there is a depth of residential development and high levels of pedestrian and cycle movement or there is a potential for high levels of pedestrian and cycle movement if a 20mph scheme was introduced; they should not be on roads where the movement of motor vehicles is the primary function.

B. where existing mean speeds provide a realistic opportunity for compliance: DfT guidance states that 20mph schemes should be self-enforcing. If the mean speed is already at or below 24mph, introducing a 20mph speed limit through signing alone is likely to lead to general compliance with the new speed limit. Mean speeds above 24mph are likely to require additional traffic management or enforcement measures.

Town/parish councils should pay for traffic surveys to take place with the number of surveys required dependent upon the extent of the proposed 20mph scheme. Location of surveys to be discussed with Road Safety Team before taking place to best ensure suitable evidence. To request a traffic survey please email trafficsurveys@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk.

C. there is significant community support; in assessing community support, the local Ward Member and town/parish councils should consider residents views to best ensure that there is broad consensus.

The full DfT guidance will be considered throughout the assessment.

Locations within conservation areas and other areas of high visual amenity can be considered suitable if the visual impact is minimal. In these areas any 20mph restrictions will normally be through 20mph zones.

Dorset Council aims to ensure that any 20mph schemes have the maximum benefit for the affected communities, such as:

- improving quality of life
- the promotion of healthier lifestyles
- sustainability and environmental benefits
- improvements to the social interaction and economic wellbeing of an area

The above points are important considerations alongside:

- reduction of collisions
- regulation of traffic speeds

Prioritising criteria

A Priority Criteria Matrix assessment incorporating the above factors will be used to prioritise schemes for Dorset Council funding. The matrix will use a scoring and weighting mechanism and is shown in Appendix A.

This process is to best ensure that 20mph schemes with the greatest need and/or likely benefit will be prioritised.

Dorset Council will allocate a budget to deliver the highest priority schemes.

Town/Parish Council funded 20mph schemes

Should an assessment be met for a 20mph scheme but is scored as a low priority, town/parish councils may be eligible to apply to fund the installation.

Information and criteria for town/parish council funded 20mph schemes can be found at Appendix B.

How to request a 20mph scheme

For speed limit changes to be considered by Dorset Council a formal application should be received from either the local Ward Member and/or the town/parish council. The form at Appendix C should be completed to support the request and submitted to the Road Safety Team roadsafety@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk who will be responsible for overseeing the policy.

On receipt of an application the Road Safety Team will make a request to the local Community Highways Team to complete an initial assessment using Appendix D. The local Community Highways Team have knowledge of their community and work closely with parish/town councils.

The assessment document is then returned to the Road Safety Team for consideration and if required further enquiries will be conducted to establish the strength of the application. If a request does not meet the criteria guidance a reason will be given. If it meets the criteria guidance the application will undergo a priority scoring assessment as described in Appendix A.

Appendix A

Priority Criteria Matrix – 20mph limit

Criterion	Definition	Low score (0-3)	Mid score (4-7)	High Score (8-10)	Weighting (1-5)
Injury collision history	Relevant injury collision data recorded by the police. Latest available five year period to be used	No collisions per mile within last five years None = 0	1-3 collisions per mile within last five years 1 = 4, 2 = 5, 3 = 7	4+ collisions per mile recorded within last five years 4 = 8, 5 = 9, 6+ = 10	5
Relevant damage only/near miss reports	Reports of damage only/near miss collision reported online via 'report a collision online' form	No collisions per mile within last five years None = 0	1-3 collisions per mile within last five years 1 = 4, 2 = 5, 3 = 7	4+ collisions per mile recorded within last five years 4+ = 10	1
Conservation area	Designated conservation area by Dorset Council	No designated area with little architectural or historic interest None = 0	Not designated but with some architectural and historic interest =7	Designated conservation area =10	2
Deprived areas	Index of multiple deprivation (IMD). National ranking (2010) by Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)	25,000+ 25K+ = 3	10,000 – 25,000 10K>-15K< = 7 15K>-20K< = 5 20K>-25K< = 4	0 to 10,000 0K>-3K< = 10 3K>-6K< = 9 6K>-10K< = 8	2
Police support	The formal view from Dorset Police on any scheme	Objection or little support Object = 0 No objection but little support = 3	Some support but with reservations Some support = 5	Full support Full support = 10	5
Potential for active travel (walking and cycling)	Evidence of either high active travel (AT) commuting or that there is considerable potential. Source: Propensity to Cycle Tool pct.bike	Existing AT commute <10%, potential <20% =3	Existing AT commute 10-25%, potential 20-35% =7	Existing AT commute >25%, potential >35% =10	2
Proximity to school	Distance to nearest school from extent of requested zone	>1km from a school =3	<1km from a school =7	<800m from a school =10	2
Active school travel usage at schools in the area	Reported levels of active travel to/from school. Source: Propensity to Cycle Tool (school travel) pct.bike	<30% active travel rate No school = 0 Has a school but <30% = 3	Between 30% and 40% active travel rates =7	>40% active travel rates =10	2

Appendix B

Town/Parish Council funded 20mph schemes

Dorset Council will be promoting 20mph schemes within the capital programme where they reach sufficient priority. Town and parish councils could promote schemes in urban areas or village streets not included in Dorset Council's programme.

It is assumed that the requested area has met the assessment in Dorset Council's principles and criteria for 20mph schemes.

Department for Transport (DfT) guidance on setting local speed limits states: "the full range of management measures should always be considered before a new speed limit is introduced".

Communities considering a 20mph scheme are strongly encouraged to establish a Community Speed Watch (CSW) as a way of gaining evidence of existing speeds and encouraging improved compliance with the speed limit.

Details of how to set up a CSW team can be found on Dorset Police's website:

[Community Speed Watch | Dorset Road Safety](#)

An active CSW team should be in place for at least 12 months. It is recognised that on rare occasions some communities may have demonstrable difficulties with establishing a team and these difficulties would not on their own prevent an application being considered. This is to demonstrate a clear commitment from within the community. If, after 12 months there is still a wish to request a 20mph scheme the town or parish council should be able to demonstrate wide community support for the proposed 20mph scheme. This can be achieved by carrying out a survey of residents and /or holding public meetings. It is important that there is a high level of community support as the installation of any 20mph scheme will involve a statutorily required period of formal public consultation costing a maximum of £1000 (cost of two public adverts).

A threshold level of support of 60% from the respondents of households affected by the proposed 20mph scheme is required. Community support is included as an important consideration throughout DfT guidance for setting local speed limits.

Key points for consideration:

- A CSW team to have been active in the community for a minimum of 12 months unless there is clear demonstrable reason why a CSW team cannot not be established
- 60% of respondent's households within the proposed 20mph scheme are supportive
- Should physical traffic calming measures be needed, support from Dorset Police and DWFRS is required
- All signage and any engineering measures should be erected/constructed using materials compliant with relevant regulations
- The requirements of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 must be met so that the 20mph scheme is legal
- Full costs of investigation, design and implementation and future maintenance should be met by the town/parish council. Future maintenance being paid for as a single payment commuted sum
- There is a risk of abortive expenditure – the Speed Limit Order process includes unavoidable advertising costs associated with the statutorily required period of public consultation. Should objections to the proposed 20mph scheme be received and upheld by Dorset Council's relevant area Planning Board the scheme may not proceed to installation

Appendix C



20mph Scheme - Application Request Form

This form is to be completed and submitted by local Ward Member and/or town/parish council to Dorset Council's Road Safety Team roadsafety@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk.

Please consider Dorset Council's guide to principles, criteria, and process before submitting application [20mph Policy - for Cabinet 01.11.2022.docx](#). Evidence of meeting the assessment must be provided. Please consider including a map with the application to help identify the scope of the scheme.

Please note all boxes can be expanded.

Location		Town / Parish Council / Local Dorset Council Ward member	
Description of community concern and expected outcome of a 20mph scheme			
Request Date			
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Completion of this form does not automatically mean that the requested 20mph scheme will be progressed.2. Dorset Council's Road Safety Team will coordinate all applications and work with the local Community Highways Team to confirm if request meets the principles for assessing 20mph scheme requests. If declined reason will be given. If it meets principles, the application will undergo a priority scoring assessment.3. By submitting this form, the parish/town council grants access to relevant traffic survey data for detailed review.			
Road Hierarchy			

Please produce evidence that the application is not on a road where the movement of motor vehicles is the primary function. Reasoning to be reviewed by Road Safety Team and forms part of the assessment process.

Collision History

Number of injury collision reported in area requested within the last 5 years. Detail to be reviewed by Dorset Council's Road Safety Team for priority scoring purposes. This forms part of the assessment process.

Fatal		Serious		Slight		Total	
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Damage only and Near Miss reports

Damage only/near miss collisions reported to the parish/town council – please describe incidents and location below. Reports can also be submitted via [the report a collision online form](#)

Traffic speed data

Town/parish council required to commission traffic surveys – location and number of sites to be determined on a case by case basis by Dorset Council's Road Safety Team in coordination with Community Highways Team, up to a maximum of 4 sites. This forms part of the process.

	Date from/to	Mean avg. speed	85 th percentile speed	Avg. Daily Traffic Flow
Site 1				
Site 2				
Site 3				
Site 4				

Local facilities covered by proposed 20mph scheme

Include additional comments regarding level of use and specific concerns

School(s)	
Shops/Retail	
Church	
Community centre	
Village hall	
Hospitality	
Health centre	
Other	

The above local facilities examples have been provided as they are facilities that could/should generate and attract trips on foot or bike.

Community Support

Please provide evidence of the level of community support. This could be the results of a survey carried out by the town/parish council and/or the results of local campaigns from within the community.

Name:		Signature:	
Email:		Telephone:	

Appendix D

Assessment Criteria - 20mph Speed Limit

1 **Location:**

2 **Road Class and Number:**

3 **Does the road have a strategic function or is the movement of motor vehicles the primary function?**

4 **Current speed limit:**

5 **Does Town / Parish support request? (Yes / No)**

6 **Depth of residential development and evidence of pedestrian and cyclist movements**

7 Average Mean Speed	Confirm mean speed from survey
20mph and below	<input type="text"/>
21 - 24mph	<input type="text"/>
25 - 29mph	<input type="text"/>
30 - 34mph	<input type="text"/>
35mph and above	<input type="text"/>

8 **CHO observations (please keep factual)**

Free text area to consider: relevant local conditions could include local amenities i.e. school, shops, church, pubs, hospitality, including any level of severance? Duration of problem, scheme complexity, any concerns that 20mph could create potential frustration to motor vehicle users, any other potential inadvertent risk from proposed scheme? Is Community Speed Watch active or planned at sight? Is scheme within conservation area or other area of high visual amenity. Have other mitigations i.e. lines and signage, SID been considered?

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Please forward document and application form to Road Safety Team for review at roadsafety@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Signature:

Name of Community Highways Team Officer:

Date: