

Report of the Director of City and Environmental Services

OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSED 50MPH SPEED LIMIT ON THE A19 AT DEIGHTON

Summary

1. A petition and over 50 application forms were received from the residents of Deighton to lower the speed limit to 40mph on the A19 between Escrick and the lay-by to the south of Gravel Pit Farm following a fatal road traffic collision. Consideration was given to the request, however as the road did not meet the Department for Transport criteria for a 40mph speed limit this was not advertised as a proposal. Instead the decision was taken to propose a 50mph speed limit along the length as this was closer to the DfT requirements for the type and character of the road in question.

Recommendations

2. Implement Option a
The current road environment and statistics indicate that the implementation of a 40 mph speed limit on the length of road it has been requested for would not have the desired effect in slowing traffic. While not ideal the advertised 50mph could be introduced along with a section of street lighting and additional surface treatment to help lower the speed of traffic close to the area of the village junction. The road could be revisited in 18 to 24 months time to assess whether the mean speed of traffic had reduced enough due to these measures to then consider a 40 mph limit on all or part of the road covered by the 50 mph limit. Compliance with a 50 mph speed limit would be achieved in the area close to the junction without the need of routine enforcement by the police; however this would probably not be the case towards the extents of the speed limit length.

Background

3. Approval was given to advertise a 50 mph speed limit on the A19 adjacent to the village of Deighton. A 40 mph speed limit was requested by the residents of Deighton however if the Department for Transport criteria for setting speed limits is to be followed this limit is not appropriate for the type of road and environment. Whilst a reasonable amount of accidents have taken place along this stretch of road, when these are analysed many are not directly speed related especially at the junction of the A19 and Main Street Deighton, although of course speed can be a factor in the accident severity. In almost all cases the reduction in the speed limit from 60 mph to 50 mph or indeed 40 mph would have no significant influence on the accidents.
4. Deighton has already been through the councils speed review process, it was one of the sites that made up the Speed Review Report in July 2010 Decision Session. NYF&R carried out speed surveys at the bus stop between 19 – 22 June 2009 (Friday – Monday inclusive). Data was collected for 4 days at which point the box reached capacity because of high traffic flows. The mean speed was recorded at 47/48mph, and the 85th percentiles speeds recorded at 53/54mph with 2.8%/3.5% travelling over the speed limit. As these speeds were under the speed limit no further action was taken. If the speed limit had already been 50mph no action, such as installing VAS, would have been taken under the Speed Review Process as this action is triggered at speeds of 10% +2 which would have required an 85th percentile speed of 57mph to be recorded. No further action was recommended.

Consultation

5. The proposals were advertised in the local press, notices put on street and details sent to the properties adjacent to the proposals giving 3 weeks for people to make representation. Some of the villagers have also independently consulted the whole village and have an 80% return in favour of a 40mph speed limit on the A19 and opposition to the advertised 50 mph limit.
6. North Yorkshire Police objected to the introduction of a 50mph speed limit. Objections are attached in Annex A.

Options

7. Option a

The current road environment and statistics indicate that the implementation of a 40 mph speed limit on the length of road it has been requested for would not have the desired effect in slowing traffic. While not ideal the advertised 50mph could be introduced along with a section of street lighting and additional surface treatment to help lower the speed of traffic close to the area of the village junction. The road could be revisited in 18 to 24 months time to assess whether the mean speed of traffic had reduced enough due to these measures to then consider a 40 mph limit on all or part of the road covered by the 50 mph limit. Compliance with a 50 mph speed limit would be achieved in the area close to the junction without the need of routine enforcement by the police; however this would probably not be the case towards the extents of the speed limit.

Cost approximately £3000 for signs and lining work + street lighting £27000

8. Option b

While the whole length of road is not suitable for a 40 mph speed limit there is strong feeling by local residents that action is needed to limit vehicle speeds close to the village junction and crossing points to local transport links. As the consultation has shown there is a significant rejection of the proposal to introduce a 50mph speed limit along the requested length of the A19. To address the concerns and fears of local residents consideration could be given to a more localised 40mph speed limit. The Department for Transport recommendations were that a minimum length for a speed limit was approximately 800 metres, however the Department for Transport have acknowledged a number of local authorities have successfully used a minimum length less than 800 metres. Given this, the Department for Transport have suggested that the minimum recommended length might be 400m, with at least 600m where possible to avoid too many changes of speed limit along the route. Using this information it would suggest that a more localised 40mph speed limit could be considered on the A19 close to Deighton village. The existing Deighton village signs could be used as the extents of a 40 mph speed limit giving a length of approximately 550m. This would overcome problems of a 40 mph limit applying to the A19 where it is open country and compliance would be poor. It would also negate any negative effect on the existing 40mph speed limit at Escrick. A system of street lighting

localised to the junction and public transport facilities could be implemented to further increase driver awareness that the road environment is different at the junction area. A 200m length would provide much clearer illumination of the junction and crossing points for drivers on the A19. Gateway road markings at the start of a 40 mph speed limit could also be implemented to enhance the effect of entering a different road environment along with repeater 40 roundels throughout the length of the area. The transport research laboratory assessment framework suggests the mean speed of traffic would be reduced to 42/44 mph within the 40mph area depending whether additional measure to encourage drivers to reduce their speed were introduced.

Cost approximately £5000 for signs and lining + £27000 for street lighting

9. Option c

As option b but with 50mph “buffers” either side. The northern length could be extended beyond the lay-by to give a more substantial length of around 500m of 50mph on the approach from the York direction. Gateway treatment could be applied at the 50mph terminal points and again where the speed limit could change to 40mph. Strict compliance with the posted speed limit may not be achievable in the 50mph areas and enforcement may be difficult on the short length between Deighton and Escrick, they would however reduce vehicle speeds before they entered the 40mph area.

The cost is approximately £7000 for signs and lining + £27000 for street lighting

10. See plans in annex B.

Analysis

11. A 40 mph speed limit was requested by the residents of Deighton however if the Department for Transport criteria for setting speed limits is to be followed this limit is not appropriate for the type of road and environment. There is strong feeling amongst the residents of Deighton that there should be an introduction of a speed limit on the A19. Compliance with a 50 mph speed limit would be achieved in the area close to the junction without the need of routine enforcement by the police; however this would probably not be the case towards the extents of the speed limit length. A reduction in vehicle speed close to the village junction where concern is greatest would improve on the current situation.

Council Priorities

12. A lower speed limit will help with 3 points in the corporate strategy.
 - (a) Building strong communities, the residents will feel less isolated and cut off.
 - (b) Protect vulnerable people, those residents with less mobility or confidence will have less of an obstacle in access or egress from the village main street.
 - (c) Protect the environment, a lower speed limit will reduce the amount of vehicle emissions and fuel consumption.
13. By addressing the needs of this local community the council will show that it is a collaborative organisation that is in touch with the community of Deighton.

Implications

14. The following implications have been considered:
 - **Financial** - Existing new sign and line budgets would not be sufficient to cover the work in any on the option. The signs and lining cost range from £3000 to £7000. All three options include an estimate of £27000 for street lighting which is not included in any existing budget. Additional funding would be required.
 - **Human Resources (HR)**
There are no HR implications?
 - **Equalities**
There are no equalities implications?
 - **Legal**
There are no legal implications?
 - **Crime and Disorder**
There are no crime and disorder implications?

- **Information Technology (IT)**

There are no IT implications?

- **Property**

There are no Property implications?

- **Other**

None.

Contact Details

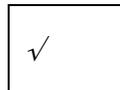
Author:

Philip Irwin
Traffic Engineer
Network Management
Tel No.(01904) 551654

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Richard Wood
Assistant Director
(Strategic Planning and Transport)

**Report
Approved**



Date

19 November
2012

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

There are no specialist implications?

Wards Affected: Wheldrake

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annex A

Objections received to the proposed 50mph.

Traffic Management Officer, North Yorkshire Police

I have studied the proposals and the Statement of reasons and offer the following observations on behalf of the North Yorkshire Police (NYP):-

1. The sole reason given in the Statement of Reasons for the making of this order is safety concerns with regards to the speed of traffic on the A19 at peak traffic periods.
2. It is not clear from the Statement of Reasons exactly what the issue is, what it is hoped to achieve or why the current limit is considered to be either problematic or inappropriate.
3. The A19 at Deighton was one of the sites included in the Speed Review Report in July 2010 Decision Session. An automated speed survey had been carried out. Because of the high traffic flow rate, only 4 days data was collected before the data storage reached capacity. The mean speed was recorded at 47/48mph, and the 85th percentile speeds recorded at 53/54mph, with 2.8%/3.5% of vehicles travelling over the speed limit (61mph +). As these speeds were under the limit, no further action was taken.
4. Looking at peak traffic flow speeds the data showed the following; average speed of traffic overall between 7.30am and 09.00 was 50mph and between 3.30pm and 6.00pm was 48mph.
5. Outside of peak hours, the introduction of an inappropriate 50mph speed limit, in isolation and without considering the area holistically, is likely to suffer from poor compliance and introduce driver frustration.
6. Most private cars travel around 50-55mph when in a 60mph speed limit. Therefore 50mph speed limits do not tend to achieve a great deal. Most none compliance would be higher than the limit, but below prosecution thresholds, meaning that any issues with the limit would be difficult to action and possibly bring the limit into disrepute. Because of this, 50mph speed limits are not normally supported by North Yorkshire Police.
7. There have been ten injury accidents listed on this section of road within the last three years. There are fourteen contributory factors listed and none of these indicate speed or inappropriate speed as a factor.
8. From the data, it is obvious that there is currently no issue with the speed of traffic on this section of road and that any safety issues

- are more associated with volume of traffic. A reduction in the speed limit will not affect or reduce that volume.
9. The introduction of a 50mph speed limit is more likely to create the conditions associated with bunching and rear end shunts and make the road less safe.
 10. There does not appear to have been any consideration taken as to the impact that a lower limit may have on the village of Escrick, where there has been an issue with compliance.
 11. The proposals do not sit with Department for Transport Guidelines with regards to this type of speed limit.
 12. It is correct to say that it is a key objective of the Department for Transport to promote safe and considerate driving, but as this proposed limit does not fit the DfT guidance this is unlikely to happen.
 13. It is therefore suggested that the implementation of a 50mph speed limit will achieve nothing tangible and is not likely to have a positive effect on the safety of the road as per your Statement of Reasons.

Based on the above observations, I object on behalf of the North Yorkshire Police to the making of this order.

Deighton Resident

For the record please find my considered response to the given YCC reasons for opting for the 50mph solution, as follows:-

Department of Transport Criteria

Department of Transport figures are not relevant to residents needs, we think common sense and democratic decision making is what is called for. What we are asking for is that our basic safety needs be treated like all other traffic challenged communities in and around York. Most if not all, except Deighton enjoy the 40mph protection we are denied. This despite that fact that their circumstances in all probability do not conform to DofT guidelines either.

Road Environment Change

This argument would appear to be conjecture rather than fact. If YCC is relying on the "rural nature" of the Escrick exit point, then surely we should be using the Government rural roads initiative and put up 20mph signs.

Differential Speed Limiter Signs

This could easily be resolved by retaining the existing 40mph at Escrick up to its current position. This could be followed by a short stretch of 50mph to Naburn Lane followed by 40mph through the White Swann/ Bus Stop through to the Chip Shop or variants of this proposal. The introduction of Traffic Lights at the Deighton Main St / A19 junction would surely resolve the majority these problems?

Driver Habit

We do not dispute some drivers will exceed speed limits, this is fact, only rigorous police action will reduce the incidence rate. Upon introduction of a 40mph we will need a short and effective police enforcement campaign. A similar campaign was conducted at Crockey Hill on introduction of their 30mph with great and lasting success with many regular users. Also the 30mph limit at Stillingfleet Rd, Escrick is regularly enforced (as many of our friends and relations know to their cost and embarrassment).

The important point surely here is that, a very large percentage of drivers do and will obey the legal speed limit.

Speed Surveys

The July 2010 speed survey results may have concluded a mean speed of 47/48mph and we understand how good statistics for assisting an argument. However we feel that mean speed is meaningless in this context. It is after all only a common average number and cannot by its definition be used to find average speed at different times of day and road conditions. We completely refute this argument.

Surely an appropriate measure for road speed when considering danger to life needs to examine the “volume and timing variable means”. At some busy times of the day every car does around 40-45mph. At “nose to tail peak period times” it is often 30-40mph, sometimes lower. At other times, mean speed will be 58 – 65mph, as our rudimentary measurements show. Excepting rush hour, a high percentage of traffic exceeds 50mph (including lorries) and a significant number exceed 60mph. I suppose it might even be possible with statistics to say that the introduction of a 50mph might even increase speed as some motorists may currently have forgotten the 40mph Escrick limit has expired and be doing their version of 40mph (apologies it is possibly as plausible as the YCC statement about mean speed!)

A19/ Main St Junction

In previous correspondence we made reference to the above junction and its legal status. It is alleged the junction may not conform to regulations and the remedy is to introduce 40mph / traffic lights or other major undertakings to make it legal. We also understand YCC undertook to respond to this query but failed to meet its deadline, are we to assume from the lack of response that the junction is indeed defective?

Deighton Resident

Reference the proposal to introduce a 50mph speed limit on the A19. I wish to object because this should have been reduced to 40mph during the recent A19 drainage works and Deighton junction modifications. I have been in correspondence with your Highways department on this matter. It is my opinion that the relevant road design regulations have not been followed. A copy of this material has also been forwarded to the North Yorkshire Police as part of their investigation into the fatality earlier this year and for consideration by the Coroner at the forthcoming inquest. It is my sincere hope that an appropriate safe speed will now be set for the A19 through Deighton in order to prevent further accidents and that speed limit must be 40mph.

Covering letter from residents and petition to be presented at meeting as required.

Annex B

