

To: Maidstone Joint Transportation Board

By: KCC Highways & Transportation

Date: 4 January 2023

Subject: Results of the public consultation for a proposed 20 mph speed limit on various roads in Harrietsham

Classification: For decision

Electoral Division: Maidstone Rural East

Summary: This report details the proposed 20 mph speed limit on various roads in Harrietsham and the results of the associated public consultation.

1.0 Introduction and Background

As part of their Highway Improvement Plan (HIP), Harrietsham Parish Council requested a 20 mph speed limit on West Street (and adjoining side roads), as well as Church Road (including Lakelands & Harrison Drive).

Harrietsham Parish Council are concerned about traffic speeds and vulnerable road users. They believe that the nature of the road environment suits a 20 mph for the enhanced benefit and safety of all road users.

This request also has the support of the local Member, KCC Cabinet Member for Communications and People, Shellina Prendergast.

2.0 Investigations

KCC work to Department for Transport Circular 01/2013 'Setting local speed limits' criteria when determining the correct speed limit for a road. Setting speed limits at the appropriate level plays a key part in ensuring greater safety for all road users.

The factors that are taken into account when setting a speed limit are:

- History of collisions
- Road geometry and engineering
- Road function
- Composition of road users
- Existing traffic speeds
- Environment

Speed surveys were also carried out at two locations along West Street, Harrietsham, between 13th July 2021 and 19th July 2021. Traffic speeds were recorded 24/7 by means of pneumatic tube counters.

The first location was west of the entrance to Harrietsham C of E Primary school, where the average speeds were recorded as **19.2 mph** (eastbound) and **20 mph** (westbound).

The second location was west of Hook Lane and the average speeds were found to be **25.5mph** (eastbound) and **23.9mph** (westbound).

The traffic surveys therefore suggest the proposed 20 mph will be generally well complied with.

3.0 The Proposals

Please refer to Appendix A for a plan of the proposed 20 mph extents.

The affected road are as follows:

ALEXANDER ROAD, BALDWINS PLACE, BOXFIELD CLOSE, BUTLER CLOSE, CHURCH ROAD, CRICKETERS CLOSE, CUTBUSH CLOSE, FORGE MEADOW, HARRISON DRIVE, HOOK LANE, HORWOOD WAY, IVENS WAY, LAKELANDS, PARKFIELD CLOSE, QUESTED WAY, SHRUBWOOD CLOSE, STATION ROAD, THE HAMPSHIREs and TITHE MEWS – For their entire length.

WEST STREET - From a point 38 metres northeast of its western junction with A20 Ashford Road to its eastern junction with A20 Ashford Road.

4.0 The Traffic Regulation Order Consultation

The Traffic Regulation Order consultation was undertaken between 22nd April 2022 and 16th May 2022.

In total there were 34 responses, of which 22 were in support of the proposed 20 mph, with 12 objections.

The objectors were contacted on 20th October 2022 with more information regarding the reasons for making the proposed traffic regulation order and given until 11th November 2022 to respond. If no response was received, the objection was upheld.

None of the objections were removed. These can be found in the following table, along with KCC's comments.

Table 1 – Objections to traffic regulation order and KCC comments

No.	Objection	KCC comments
1	Obstacles in the Road already slow it down	Kent County Council (KCC) is responsible for a number of public health functions, including helping to improve the wellbeing of the county's population. 20 mph speed limits are growing in demand at a local and national level and play a key part of KCC's commitment to public health. Moreover, the proposed 20 mph speed limit in Harrietsham is also intended to contribute towards road safety, network management and local amenity enhancements.
2	Because those that speed will continue to do so regardless, the sensible drivers will be penalised into crawling around. The cost to implement this could be put to much better use.	
3	I still do not understand this obsession to spend money in this way. It is a waste of time and money when you cannot enforce it. Besides, a lot of these roads by their very nature mean you can only do around 20mph so I see it as rather pointless.	The traffic surveys suggested good overall levels of compliance with a lower speed limit. When considering & setting local speed limits, KCC work to guidance prescribed by the Department for Transport (DfT) in Circular 01/2013. As such, the proposed 20 mph is considered to be evidence-led, self-explaining and encourage self-compliance.
4	<p>This will only cause people to not care about the limit, Harrietsham is already slow enough and common sense can be used. In addition, the roads are not policed so lowering the speed limit is pointless unless it is going to be enforced.</p> <p>There is also some responsibility on pedestrians to understand roads and highway safety. If there is no pavement on a road & someone wishes to walk down it then they should wear visible clothing, slowing the road down will just cause more people to ignore the limit all together. Just look at Leeds and Langley.</p> <p>Maybe the council should look at adding more pavements as they are building more and more houses in the areas.</p>	<p>Circular 01/2013 recommends consideration of 20 mph speed limits on built-up village streets which are primarily residential in nature, or where pedestrian and cyclist movements are high.</p> <p>Trip generators in the area for vulnerable road users include the primary school, station and village hall.</p> <p>Circular 01/2013 also recognises the direct correlation between reducing traffic speeds and the reduction in collisions and casualties.</p> <p>It is worthwhile adding that the benefits of 20 mph schemes include quality of life and help encourage walking & cycling.</p> <p>A 20 mph speed limit is supported by Harrietsham Parish Council and County Member Shellina Prendergast.</p>
5	I do not believe that the reduction in limit will do anything but cause congestion. A 20mph limit should only be for schools	
6	There are no details, evidence, or	

	<p>statistics on view to the public to show how you have come to the decision to select certain roads. You broadly use the terms "safety" etc. to justify your aims and potentially mislead the public. Are these accident blackspots? How many complaints about these roads have you received? You don't say. Hollingbourne has a similar 20mph restriction to "safeguard children going to and from school" but it stays in force 24hrs a day every day. Why, when there are no schoolchildren after school hours? Your decision to restrict must be evidence based and restrictions must not just be blanket restrictions but targeted accordingly to the actual hazard timewise (such as yellow zig-zags outside schools, parking restrictions etc.)</p>	
7	<p>I object to the speed restrictions it will cause more congestion this converts to more pollution, the air quality has been made worse with the 30mph limit I am COPD and have suffered more since then. Other problems safety problems should be addressed first This speed limits a cheap get out from building more footpaths where needed, Example church Rd which is access to GP surgery and village hall. The biggest Danger is cars parking on footpaths this make children Mothers with prams and most pedestrians walk out onto the roads and should be addressed immediately.</p>	
8	<p>I drive over 150 miles a day. I have driven through Harrietsham for over 22 years. The pavements are adequate to keep pedestrians off the road. I would like to see the figures on the accident rate that must have risen significantly to warrant the 30 mile speed limit let</p>	

	alone the proposed 20 mile limit	
9	Ridiculous- I am wondering what safety / accidents have occurred on any of these roads in the last year to warrant a speed reduction. Having lived here for 25 years this proposal would have got my approval if it had been applied sensibility to those busier roads on the list rather than the extreme list presented.	
10	Will not be enforced not enough police	
11	I do support the speed reduction for some roads in Harrietsham. However, it would seem that little thought has been given to which roads actually need it? Instead, there has been a 'blanket approach' to reduction covering only two areas in the village? These include the 'Closes' and 'Places', where the restrictions are hardly warranted? Other roads in the village are not to be covered by the 20mph speed limit. East Street? Marley Road? Dickley Lane? Church Lane. Southfields Way and Buckingham Drive (where the Co-op is)? These, along with West Street are all areas where the current 30mph limit means that there are very real road safety issues. Agree with the idea, but it needs more thought? How about asking residents which roads they find would benefit from a 20mph restriction?	
12	there is no reason for this, there is next to zero accidents or deaths etc in the area, these changes are 100% being made due to the attack on the private ownership of vehicles and pure power tripping authority figures backing up the agenda, the only ones affected by all this is us poor peasants the rich who are behind it just go on living their lives without conscience, the	

	time to make a stand is now! cars are our way of life, they give us freedom and enjoyment and they wish to take this from us, no more! they've taken enough, sorry for the rant but truth needs to be spoken aloud more now than ever.	
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5.0 Corporate implications

5.1 Financial & VAT

The speed limit reduction is to be funded by KCC.

5.2 Legal

All works will be within the publicly maintainable highway for which Kent County Council is responsible.

5.3 Corporate

None.

6. Recommendation

That the Joint Transportation Board agrees to overturn the objections and recommends proceeding with the implementation of the 20 mph as advertised via the traffic regulation order.

The introduction of the order is recommended on the grounds of improving safety for road users in Harrietsham and particularly for vulnerable road users.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Scheme Plan

Appendix B1 – Consultation Responses

Appendix B2 – Traffic Regulation Order Consultation Deposit Documents

Background Papers

None.