



Amersham Community Board meeting

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| Title: | Petition Response - request for a speed limit reduction to 40mph on the A355 |
| Date: | February 2021 |
| Author: | Dave Roberts, Head of Highways, Buckinghamshire Council |
| Contact officer: | Sue Brown, Transport for Buckinghamshire |

Summary

An ePetition was published on the council's website on 12th January with an end date of 9th February requesting:

" the council to Reduce the speed limit of the A355 from National Speed limit to max 40mph along its length

Justification:

This is a very busy and fast road. In particular past Coleshill, there are numerous footpath crossings, entry and exits from driveways, car parks for the pub and hatchery shop as well as turnings for the village.

Crossing on foot feels very treacherous, especially with small children.

There have been several fatalities on this road and more could be prevented if the limit was reduced to 40mph.

If the road speed was consistent along its length, this would also help to reduce the congestion at each approach to Amersham and Beaconsfield."

The A355 runs from Amersham to Slough. It is understood that the petitioners are seeking a speed limit reduction on the national speed limit section of the A355 between Amersham and Beaconsfield. This section of road covers two Community Board areas, and as such this petition response has also been provided to the Beaconsfield Community Board.

This response has been written prior to the end of the petition in order to provide a response to the February Board meeting.

Recommendation

Transport for Buckinghamshire (TfB) will advise the Community Board if the A355 will be identified for road safety improvements during 2021/22, as soon as the results of the annual analysis and identification of sites is known (March 2021).

If the A355 is not identified as a priority site for treatment, then the Parish/Town Council or Community Board may wish to further investigate the petitioners request to reduce the speed limit along a section of the A355 by requesting a Speed Limit Assessment from Transport for Buckinghamshire.

Background information:

- The TfB annual analysis of injury collisions across Buckinghamshire over the past 5 years is currently being undertaken. This will determine where safety schemes during 2021/22 will be installed in order to reduce collisions. The A355 will be considered as part of this analysis. However other routes with higher injury collisions may, by necessity, receive a higher priority.

The analysis of contributory factors involved in collisions and the identification of these sites and routes will be completed by 30th March 2. This analysis may result in a proposed reduction of the speed limit or alternative road safety measures, which would be funded by the Council.

- The 5km section of the A355 between Amersham and Beaconsfield is currently subject to the national speed limit.
- In 2013 the Department of Transport reviewed its guidance on speed limits. A link to the guidance can be seen within the background papers section of this report.

The DfT guidance on rural speed management at section 7 states:

“The speed limit on single carriageway rural roads should take into account the history of collisions, the road’s function, existing mean traffic speed, use by vulnerable road users, the road’s geometry and engineering, and the road environment including level of road-side development”.

*Also, “Speed limit (mph) where limit should apply: **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 50 mph, so lower limit does not interfere with traffic flow. **40** Should be considered where there are many bends, junctions or accesses, substantial development, a strong environmental or landscape reason, or where there are considerable numbers of vulnerable road users”.*

- When taking into consideration the DfT Guidance the national speed limit (60 mph for cars) is appropriate for the class and nature of the road.

- Notwithstanding the above, if the Parish Council or Community Board wish to explore the petitioners request further, then the current process is that a full speed limit assessment may be undertaken.
- The assessment involves a comparison against the DfT Guidance, a speed survey and a site visit with the Thames Valley Police (TVP) Traffic Management Officer. A written report is then provided to the requester. If TVP do not support the proposal or it does not meet with DfT guidance, then the proposal is not generally recommended to proceed. There is currently a cost of £895 for this service (plus £490 per set of data collection tubes).
- It should also be noted that since the conclusion of the countywide speed limit review in 2013, the Council no longer have funds to progress new speed limit requests. A formal Decision was made by the Cabinet Member for Transport in KDR PT01.13 (see link within Background Papers section) that any further requests for changes to speed limits will be funded either:
 - directly by individual Parish/Town Councils, or
 - by a Community Board via the Community Area Priorities Budget process, or
 - from independent sources or
 - as part of a casualty reduction scheme or
 - via a developer funded agreement.
- The report also states that *“Irrespective of the funding source, requests for speed limit changes will only be consulted upon and implemented if they comply with the national guidance on setting speed limits”*.
- Due to analysis of collisions that were occurring on A355 between the junctions of Tower Road and Magpie Lane improvements were carried out 2017. Work included an upgrade to the signing, central studs and lining. The section was also retextured to improve grip of the road surface.

Resource implications

None identified

Legal implications

None identified

Other implications/issues

None identified

Feedback from consultation, Community Boards and Local Member views (if relevant)

None received at time of writing. Petition closed on 9 February and response processed in advance to meet Board publishing date.

Background Papers

[link to DfT Setting Local speed Limits 2013: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-local-speed-limits/setting-local-speed-limits>

Link to Key Decision Report : KDR PT01. 2013 :
<https://buckinghamshire.moderngov.co.uk/CeListDocuments.aspx?Committeeld=543&MeetingId=5141&DF=21%2f02%2f2013&Ver=2>
