



Report to Leader (Transport portfolio)

Decision Date:	3 March 2022
Reference number:	[for cabinet member decisions only]
Title:	A355 Amersham Road Speed Reduction Order
Cabinet Member(s):	Councillor Steve Broadbent
Author and/or contact officer:	Bestman Agu; Design Engineer; Tel: 01296531128
Ward(s) affected:	Chalfont St Giles - Councillors Timothy Butcher, Carl Jackson & Simon Rouse Beaconsfield - Councillors Anita Cranmer, Jackson Ng & Alison Wheelhouse

Summary

This report relates to the outcome of the statutory consultation on the proposal to introduce a 50mph speed limit on a section of the A355 Amersham Road in Beaconsfield. Scheme identified as TfB Safety Scheme due to reported 7 injury collisions [1 Fatal, 2 Serious and 4 Slight] in 5-year period.

A large number of responses (563) were received, however a significant number of these did not provide a comment which makes it difficult to determine the basis for any objection.

The overall breakdown is as follows:

- 49 in support (25 of which provided no comment)
- 512 objections (497 of which provided no comment)
- 2 undecided (1 of which provided no comment)

We therefore might have people simply objecting to the principle of reducing speed limits without considering the safety factors or wanting the speed limit to be further reduced to something lower than the 50mph proposed.

As a result, if we only analyse the responses that include a comment the results change significantly:

- 24 in support
- 15 objections
- 1 undecided

Noting the scheme has been identified as a road safety scheme based upon reported injury collision history, we recommended that this proposal should proceed in order to reduce accidents and near miss incidences along this A355 Amersham Road section.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Leader:

- a) Considers the objections, feedback and support received during Statutory Consultation, as detailed in this report.**
- b) authorises the making and introduction of the Traffic Regulation Order as set out in this report, for the introduction of a 50mph speed limit on A355 Amersham Road, Beaconsfield.**
- c) authorises the Traffic Regulation Order to be brought into operation.**
- d) approves that consultees and responders are informed of the decision.**

Reason for decision:

Transport for Buckinghamshire was commissioned by Buckinghamshire Council to undertake a statutory consultation for a proposed 50 mph speed limit to be introduced on the A355 Amersham Road between Tower Road and Beaconsfield. This site has been identified through Network Safety 2021/22 Schemes review following petition received from local residents because of 1No fatal collision involving a car and motorcyclist. Lowering the existing speed limit from 60mph to 50mph is required for safety reasons and reducing collisions incidences. TfB carried out a speed limit assessment of the location against the DfT Guidance for Speed Limits and has approved a reduction to 50mph, which also has agreement from Thames Valley Police.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This Key Decision Report relates to the outcome of a statutory consultation on the proposal to reduce the current national speed limit (60mph) to 50mph on the A355 Amersham Road, between Tower Road and Beaconsfield. The proposals are aimed at reducing speeds along this section of the A355 Amersham Road and reduce the collision clusters along the route.
- 1.2 Transport for Buckinghamshire was commissioned to undertake safety improvements along the A355 between Gore Hill and Whipass Hill. The proposed 50 mph is aimed to reduce the speeds on the A355 Amersham Road in Beaconsfield.
- 1.3 Scheme was identified and funded through Buckinghamshire Council's Network Safety Capital Funding.
- 1.4 Transport for Buckinghamshire received requests during the formal consultation stage from one of the county council as well as general public to consider a 40mph speed limit proposal. However, this was not practicable due to local conditions which did not meet DfT standards for setting out speed limits and Thames Valley Police (TVP) would not support for enforcement.
- 1.5 TfB undertook a speed limit assessment to review the suitability of this scheme which concludes that introducing a 50mph speed limit on the A355 Amersham Road would be appropriate following the reported 7 injury collisions (1 Fatal, 2 Serious and 4 Slight Injuries) between 01/11/2015 and 31/10/2020.
- 1.6 The collisions have occurred throughout the series of double bends between the Tower Road and Magpie Lane junctions, indicating a problem with the whole section rather than a specific cluster. As a result, the section between Whipass Hill and Gore Hill is Transport for Buckinghamshire's focus in terms of remedial measures.
- 1.7 Therefore, the following measures are proposed:
 - enhanced signing & lining and
 - vegetation clearance and
 - 50mph Speed Limit on the A355 Amersham Road from Gore Hill to Whipass Hill. Speed limit extent starts from a point approximately 70 metres north of A355 junction with Tower Road and continuing south-westwards for 3990m, where it then terminates at an existing 40mph terminal sign towards Whipass Hill (on Southbound approach).
- 1.8 After consideration of the responses to the public consultation, it is recommended to go ahead with this scheme including the speed limit reduction.

2. Content of report

- 2.1 Buckinghamshire Council is responsible for the highway network within its boundary; this includes the provision and management of speed limits. Enforcement of speed limits is then part of the remit of Thames Valley Police.
- 2.2 The speed limit proposal is part of a Buckinghamshire Council Network Safety Fund scheme, delivered by Transport for Buckinghamshire (TfB), to reduce the number of fatal and serious injury collisions on the A355 between Tower Road and Beaconsfield. Objective of the reduced speed limit is to improve road safety and reduce collisions along this specific road section.
- 2.3 Funding has been allocated within the Network Safety Fund to consult on a lower speed limit on the A355 carriageway along with the necessary signage and lining works to introduce the new 50 mph speed limit.
- 2.4 The proposed speed limit was advertised and promoted locally through a statutory consultation process carried out between 4 October 2021 and 29 October 2021 in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. The Police, Fire & Rescue and the Ambulance Services were included in the consultation.

Copies of the statutory consultation documents are located here:

<https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/roads-parking/a355-amersham-road-proposed-speed-limit-reduction/>

- 2.5 Thames Valley Police confirmed that it had no objection to the proposals going ahead, as the speed data collected from 15/07/2021 to 21/07/2021 show average 85thile speeds to be commensurate with the proposed 50mph limit on this particular section of carriageway.

Appendices to the Report

Appendix A:

Summary of Objections, Support and Feedback

Appendix B:

Map Tiles

Appendix C:

Notice, Traffic Regulation Order & Statement of Reasons.

3. Other options considered

- 3.1 Keep the existing speed limits, however this will not achieve the desired reduction in collisions and/or near misses.
- 3.2 Reducing speed limit on A355 Amersham Road from 60mph to 40mph. However, this section of road does not meet the DfT criteria for a 40mph, and therefore unlikely to be supported by Thames Valley Police.

4. Legal and financial implications

- 4.1 Section 122 of The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 places a duty on Buckinghamshire Council to secure the expeditious, convenient, and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians), on its highways. A Traffic Authority should only make an Order to control the flow of traffic where it is expedient to do so.
- 4.2 Regulation 14 of the TRO Regulations state that an order making authority may modify an order – whether in receipt of any objections or otherwise – before it is then made.
- 4.3 When the decision is taken and recommendations agreed, the Traffic Regulation Order will be made. The responders to the consultation and persons likely to be affected will be informed of the decision made.
- 4.4 In accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, the TRO will then be made and publicised by Buckinghamshire Council.
- 4.5 If approved, this key decision will be the authority for Legal Services to 'make' the TRO and advertise the Notice of Making in the local press in accordance with the Procedure Regulations.
- 4.6 Scheme was identified and funded through Buckinghamshire Council's Network Safety Capital Funding.

5. Corporate implications

- 5.1 ***Property & HR implications***– None identified
- 5.2 ***Climate change & sustainability implications*** – None identified
- 5.3 ***Equality & Diversity Issues*** – Equality Act 2010. This proposal will not have any disproportionate effect upon people with protected characteristics. The scheme will introduce a speed limit reduction to 50 mph speed limit on A355 Amersham Road. This will encourage drivers to reduce their speeds and drive safety on these roads, contributing to a safer highway network.

5.4 **Value for money** – The sign installation work will be tendered and carried out by an approved sub-contractor on behalf of Transport for Buckinghamshire

Road markings will be tendered and carried out by an approved sub-contractor working on behalf of Transport for Buckinghamshire.

5.5 **Resource Implications** – If the recommendations are agreed, the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) will be made by Buckinghamshire Council and the implementation of signing and subsequent management would be delivered by Transport for Buckinghamshire and its supply chain partners. Enforcement of speed limits is the responsibility of Thames Valley Police.

Future maintenance of all assets will be through the Transport for Buckinghamshire general maintenance budgets. The funding of the scheme is from Buckinghamshire Council Network Safety Fund.

6. Feedback from consultation + Local Member/community boards views

6.1 A period of statutory consultation was undertaken between 4/10/2021 and 29/10/2021. This included:

- a) Notices delivered to adjacent properties from 4th October – 5th October 2021;
- b) Emails to TfB Statutory Consultees list, including police, emergency services, relevant user groups and Local Members;
- c) Placed on BCC 'Your Voice Bucks' website (documentation posted online included -- letter and plan, Statement of Reasons, Statutory Notice);
- d) Legal advert published in the Bucks Free Press on 1st October 2021;
- e) Posters advertising the consultation placed on both main A355 and side roads.

6.2 In total 563 people responded via the online questionnaire, letters or/and emails:

- 49 responses supported the proposal <8.7%>
- 512 responses were opposed to the proposal <90.9%>
- 2 responses were unsure about the proposal <0.4%>

6.3 A significant number of the responses (incl. 497 of 512 objections) provided no comment and no name or contact details. Without comment it is unclear as to whether the respondents' objection was simply to the principle of reducing speed

limits without considering the safety factors or wanting the speed limit to be further reduced to something lower than the 50mph proposed.

6.4 Noting the scheme has been identified as a road safety scheme based upon the report injury collision history, if we disregard the feedback without any comment the result changes drastically [see below]:

- 24 in support
- 15 objections

6.5 The responses raised a number of comments and issues. The 15 comments in objection have been summarised as follows:

- a) There is little or no supporting evidence / reasons supplied to justify reduction in speed limit.
- b) Collisions were due to inappropriate driving behaviour, and not regarding the 60mph current speed limit.
- c) Concern that traffic congestion will increase during rush hours.
- d) Drivers will ignore the proposed reduction and there will be fewer overtaking opportunities.
- e) Existing road as being safe and in good condition to be a National Speed limit
- f) Lowering the speed limit would not have an impact on motorists who exceed the current speed limit.
- g) Suggestion for speed cameras.
- h) Water of resource/money.

6.6 As well as objections, we have also received 24 comments in support which are summarised below:

- a) Many motorists are driving above the current national speed limit.
- b) Concern for pedestrian safety crossing road.
- c) A355 is a dangerous road [especially at night].
- d) Many injuries and/or fatalities on this stretch of the A355.
- e) Identified ponding issues during wet weather.
- f) Similar road with 50mph are within Bucks.

6.7 A summary of the feedback and TfB's response to the comments is contained in Appendix A. These have been reviewed and considered against the Statement of Reasons.

6.8 The responses of the Key Stakeholders are recorded below:

Councillor Alison Wheelhouse responded: *“I am happy to support the officers' recommendation having read the evidence in the reports and I also see that this is supported by TVP”*.

Councillor Timothy Butcher responded: *“I am fully supportive of this reduction in the speed limit from 60MPH to 50MPH; This reduction in the speed limit is supported by the Parish Council and a significant number of Coleshill Residents”*.

Councillor Anita Cranmer responded: *“I am totally in favour of the proposed speed reduction. It can be a dangerous road at 60mph and the crossing and exit points very hazardous”*.

- 6.9 Councillor Jackson Ng (Beaconsfield), Cllrs Carl Jackson (Coleshill) & Simon Rouse (Coleshill) did not provide any feedback.
- 6.10 Thames Valley Police have no objection to this speed limit reduction proposal and they have agreed to the scheme extents.
- 6.11 Taking all of the feedback received during the consultation process and the overall aims for the scheme, it is recommended that the proposals are implemented as advertised.

7. Communication, engagement & further consultation

- 7.1 All consultees and responders to the consultation will be contacted by either e-mail or letter and will be informed of the decision and where they can find the details of the statutory consultation and the decision taken. This report will be published on the Buckinghamshire Council web page.
- 7.2 No additional speed limit reviews are proposed on this road.

8. Next steps and review

- 8.1 If these recommendations are accepted, Buckinghamshire Council will make the amendment to the Traffic Regulation Order covering the locations outlined in this Key Decision Report (KDR).
- 8.2 Following a decision on this report, the implementation of the scheme will be in Spring 2022 (NB:- If this report is rejected, there will be no changes to the current Traffic Regulation Order).
- 8.3 No further reviews have been planned for this road.

9. Background papers

- 9.1 The full summary of objections and feedback received are shown in Appendix A.
- 9.2 The map tiles which were advertised at the statutory consultation stage can be found in Appendix B.
- 9.3 The full details of our proposals, contents summary from the statutory consultation and all other statutory consultation documents including its draft Traffic Regulation Order, statement of reasons and On-Site Notice can be found in Appendix C.

10. Your questions and views (for key decisions)

- 10.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report please get in touch with the author of this report. If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider please inform the democratic services team. This can be done by telephone 01296 382343 or email democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk.

