



CABINET – 16 SEPTEMBER 2016

**A50 BRADGATE HILL, MARKFIELD ROAD, GROBY ROAD
AND LEICESTER ROAD IN THE PARISHES OF
GROBY AND GLENFIELD -
PROPOSED TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF
ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT**

PART A

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Cabinet's approval for proposals to introduce a 40mph speed limit and to close a number of gaps in the central reservation on parts of the A50 corridor through Glenfield, Groby and Markfield.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that a 40mph speed limit be introduced on Leicester Road, Glenfield, Groby Road, Glenfield, Markfield Road, Groby and Bradgate Hill, Groby and the gaps in the central reservation on Markfield Road and Bradgate Hill, Groby be closed as shown on the plan attached as Appendix A of the report.

Reason for Recommendation

3. Implementing a 40mph speed limit will provide a consistent speed limit along the A50 corridor as well as addressing the concerns of and to improve the quality of life for local residents.
4. There have been three personal injury accidents recorded in connection with the gaps in the central reservation, including one fatality in 2012, closure of the gaps will improve safety along this stretch of the carriageway. A recent safety audit supports the closure of the gaps and there is overwhelming support to do so from consultation respondents (92%). The background, proposals and consultation are outlined in Part B of this report.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

5. Subject to the Cabinet's approval, the TRO will be made and implemented as soon as possible.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

6. In March 2000, the Cabinet authorised the Director of Environment and Transport to overrule objections to future Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), provided that the proposed order had the support of the appropriate local Member(s), and that the Cabinet Lead Member was in agreement. Where support is not forthcoming, the matter should be referred to the Cabinet for determination.
7. Having considered the proposal, Mr. L. Yates CC has indicated that he cannot support the scheme. The proposal is therefore referred to the Cabinet for consideration.

Resource Implications

8. The estimated cost of implementing the speed limit scheme is £9,500. The estimated cost of implementing the scheme for the closure of the gaps is £20,000. These measures would be funded from the £200,000 allocated for Road Safety schemes.

Legal Implications

9. The Council's power to make TROs is derived from the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. Section 122 of the Act places a duty on the Council to exercise the functions conferred by the Act to secure the expeditious convenient and safe movement of traffic. The proposals in this report are intended to improve highway safety.
10. In making the TRO, the Council would comply with prescribed statutory process.
11. The Director of Law and Governance has been consulted on the proposals.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

12. Mr. L. Yates CC, Mr. O. O'Shea CC and Mr. D. A. Sprason CC.

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PART B

Background

13. Concerns were raised by local residents and Mr. O. O'Shea CC regarding excessive vehicle speeds on Bradgate Hill in Groby. Those concerned highlighted two recent accidents on Bradgate Hill; the first of which was a double fatality that occurred on 29 January 2016 and the second a 'slight' injury accident that occurred on 1 March 2016.
14. A number of local residents, Mr. O. O'Shea CC, Edward Argar MP and David Tredinnick MP held a meeting in March 2016 regarding their concerns. As a result of representations made following the meeting, the County Council consulted on a proposed speed limit reduction from 50mph to 40mph and the closure of the gaps in the central reservation.
15. It should be noted that the cause of the double fatality on the 29 January has not yet been determined. One driver involved in the collision has been charged with two counts of causing death by dangerous driving and one count of causing serious injury by dangerous driving in connection with the incident. The court proceedings arising are ongoing therefore it is yet to be determined whether or not speed was a contributory factor.

Setting Local Speed Limits

16. The Department for Transport (DfT) has issued guidance regarding setting local speed limits DfT Circular 01/2013 -

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/63975/circular-01-2013.pdf
17. The overall speed limit framework is the responsibility of Government. The three national speed limits are:
 - 30mph on roads with street lighting
 - 60mph on single carriageway roads
 - 70mph on dual carriageways and motorways.
18. These national limits however are not appropriate for all roads. The speed limit regime enables highway authorities to set local speed limits in situations where local needs and conditions suggest a speed limit which is different from the respective national speed limit.
19. Key objectives of the Circular (01/2013) include achieving local speed limits that better reflect the needs of all road users, not just motorised vehicles and ensuring improved quality of life for local communities, especially in rural communities, emphasising that speed management strategies should seek to protect local community life.

20. The guidance outlines common factors that should be considered including the level of road-side development and possible noise or air quality impacts on residents and states that these factors may be weighted differently and that the impact on community and environmental outcomes should be considered.
21. Interpretation of the guidance could deem A50 Bradgate Hill appropriate for either a 40mph or 50mph speed limit; 50mph is the appropriate limit for dual carriageways that have become partially built up, with little or no roadside development. However the guidance also states that to ensure consistency within routes, assessments should be made for each length of 600 metres or more to determine the appropriate limit. When this assessment is complete, the final choice of speed limit for individual sections might need to be adjusted to provide reasonable consistency over the route as a whole.
22. At present the route from the M1 to the City boundary is subject to a number of changes in speed limit; 50mph, national speed limit, 40mph, 50mph, 40mph, national speed limit, 50mph and then 40mph from the City boundary. Therefore, based on the methodology set out in the guidance it would not be unreasonable for the A50 Bradgate Hill, Markfield Road, Groby Road and Leicester Road to be deemed appropriate for a 40mph limit to provide consistency to drivers along the route. Such consistency aids with reducing driver confusion, making it easier for drivers to determine the appropriate speed at which to drive.
23. Speed limits are imposed by the making of a TRO; the provisions for their creation are contained within the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA). Section 1 of this Act outlines the reasons for making such Orders, for example to avoid danger to persons or traffic using roads, to facilitating the passage of traffic and for preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs. Section 122 of the RTRA outlines that it is the duty of local authorities to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) on the highway.

Proposals

24. The consultation proposal comprised of two options as shown on drawing numbers TM4410/3/2016 (Option A) and TM4410/4/2016 (Option B) attached as Appendix B:
 - Option A proposes a 40mph speed limit on Leicester Road, Glenfield, Groby Road, Glenfield, Markfield Road, Groby and Bradgate Hill, Groby and the closure of 7 gaps in the central reservation. This option has an additional length of proposed 40mph speed limit on Markfield Road, Groby in the vicinity of Markfield Road slip road, situated south-east of the Scania depot north-west bound only, to the existing 40mph limit. This option sees the gaps at the Scania depot and Groby Parks Farm, on Bradgate Hill, remain open.
 - Option B proposes a 40mph speed limit on Leicester Road, Glenfield, Groby Road, Glenfield, Markfield Road, Groby and Bradgate Hill, Groby and the closure of 9 gaps in the central reservation. This option sees the

existing national speed limit remain on north-west bound approach to the Scania depot, until it meets the existing 40mph limit. This option proposes the closure of the gaps at the Scania depot and Groby Parks Farm, on Bradgate Hill.

Consultation

25. The scheme crosses the electoral divisions of Mr. L. Yates CC, for Glenfield, Mr. O. O'Shea CC for Ratby and Groby, and Mr. D. Sprason CC for Markfield, Desford and Thornton. All three Councillors were informed 21 days prior to the publication of the proposal.
26. Mr. Yates does not support the speed limit proposal, Mr. O'Shea is fully supportive of the proposals and Mr. Sprason would be supportive of the scheme provided there were to be adequate enforcement.
27. The public consultation was undertaken on the proposed TROs on 13 May 2016 for five weeks. The scheme was advertised in the local press, Leicestershire County Council's website, signs were erected on site, and letters were sent to affected residents and businesses. Copies of the proposals were made available for inspection at the offices of Blaby District Council and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and at the Parish Councils for Glenfield, Groby and Markfield.
28. During the consultation period 214 responses were received in connection with the speed limit proposals; 58% (124) objected and 42% (90) supported the introduction of a 40mph limit. The table below identifies the views of respondents broken down by their location:

	<u>Object</u>	<u>Support</u>	<u>Total</u>
A50 residents, or residents of side roads and directly affected	6 (10%)	56 (90%)	62 (100%)
Residents of Groby, Markfield or Glenfield, excluding A50 & side roads	52 (78%)	15 (22%)	67 (100%)
Derive from outside of the affected villages	66 (78%)	19 (22%)	85 (100%)
Total	124 (58%)	90 (42%)	214 (100%)

The above table clearly demonstrates that the vast majority of those residents living on, or just off the road, support the proposals, whereas a

significant majority of those residents who live further afield but who use the road object to the proposals. Of those supporting the speed limit proposal 46 (51%) preferred Option A which includes the additional length of 40mph speed limit in the vicinity of the Markfield Road slip road, 12 (13%) preferred Option B, and 32 (36%) did not specify a preference.

29. The response from Leicestershire Police states that *“The National Police Chiefs Council guidance makes it clear that proportionality is the key word when discussing any level of enforcement. The police should not routinely enforce inappropriate limits. Action taken by the police to achieve compliance should be proportionate to the risk to individuals and property. Should a 40 mph limit be introduced and high levels of non-compliance become an issue, Leicestershire Police will request Leicestershire County Council to introduce other measures on Bradgate Hill in [sic] gain better compliance”*.
30. Officers understand that the basis for Leicestershire Police’s view regarding the proposed speed limit reduction on Bradgate Hill is that current recorded speeds on that section of road are likely to support the retention of a 50mph speed limit. The mean speed on Bradgate Hill is 49mph southbound and 50mph northbound. This would appear to show that drivers’ perception is that the road environment is such that higher speeds are appropriate for this section of road.
31. The proposal for the reduced speed limit does not include any engineering measures therefore the only physical amendment will be signage. DfT guidance indicates that a principle aim should be to provide a consistent message between the speed limit and what the road looks like, i.e. drivers’ perception of appropriate speed for the environment can be a factor in determining the speed at which they will drive on that road. Therefore Leicestershire Police may consider that without any additional measures, it is unlikely that there will be a perception of a need to reduce speed.
32. Whilst there have been a number of recorded personal injury accidents on Bradgate Hill over the past five years, the site is below the national average accident rate. Therefore given the current budgetary constraints facing the authority, this site would not meet the criteria for physical measures to be implemented.
33. During the consultation period 118 responses were received in connection with the closure of the gaps; 108 (92%) supported the closure of the gaps and 10 (8%) objected.
34. A summary of the written responses received during the consultation are provided in Appendix C with an officer’s response.

Conclusions

35. DfT guidance could be interpreted to determine an appropriate speed limit of either 40 or 50mph, based on the grounds of consistency of speed limit and therefore reducing potential driver confusion of the speed limit that should be

adhered to while travelling along the A50 between the M1 and Leicester, or alternatively due to its characteristics of partially built-up dual carriageway.

36. As is clear from the consultation responses on the speed limit proposals, the majority of the local residents are supportive of the speed limit reduction to 40mph while for those in surrounding communities or “through motorists”, the majority object. A number of those objecting cite additional journey time or the classification of the road (A50) as justifying the higher speed limit. The DfT guidance on speed limits considers these matters and states that higher speed is often perceived to bring benefits in terms of shorter travel times for people and goods. However, evidence suggests that when traffic is travelling at constant speeds, even at a lower level, it may result in shorter and more reliable overall journey times, and that journey time savings from higher speed are often overestimated (Stradling *et al.*, 2008).
37. A number of the objectors to the speed limit reduction cite the road environment, which being only partially built up in nature of this section of road, could equally justify a 50mph limit. The DfT guidance does state that while key factors for consideration are history of collisions, road geometry and engineering, road function, composition of road users (including vulnerable users), existing traffic speeds and road environment, the impact on community and environmental outcomes should also be considered.
38. A number of objectors raised the matter of the need for enforcement to ensure compliance with a 40mph limit. DfT guidance supports this in its view that speed limits are only one element of speed management and that local speed limits should not be set in isolation. They should be part of a package with other speed management measures including engineering and road geometry that respect the needs of all road users and raise the driver's awareness of their environment; education; driver information; training and publicity.
39. It has already been stated that due to the below national average recorded personal injury accident rate on this section of road, this site would not justify further measures. The County Council, through its involvement in the Leicester and Leicestershire Road Safety Partnership, does however provide driver awareness training, education and information programmes to help across the board with road safety matters including compliance with speed limits. It is acknowledged however, that there is a risk that implementation of a speed limit reduction to 40mph would not guarantee a significant reduction in actual speeds as this will rely on self-compliance by drivers.
40. The issue of difficulty of being able to comply with a 40mph speed limit when travelling south east towards Leicester given the downhill topography has been raised. This however, is potentially the same as having to comply with 30mph limits on downhill roads within the urban area. As drivers will be aware, starting such a downhill section at or just below the set limit with no acceleration usually means a car will stay around that speed. Given that on entering this downhill section, drivers will just have negotiated the roundabout at the entrance to the landfill site means speeds at that point should be relatively low, thus merely

requiring drivers to refrain from accelerating on exit from this roundabout to ensure they comply with the 40mph limit.

41. It should also be noted that a procurement exercise by the Road Safety Partnership for new safety cameras is currently ongoing. As part of this work a review will be undertaken on suitable sites for these cameras across the county. If the speed limit was to be reduced to 40mph, the assessment of the A50 would be based on that new speed limit. Until this review is carried out however, the potential for safety camera enforcement on this section of highway cannot be confirmed.
42. A summary of the advantages and disadvantages of reducing the speed limit to 40mph is provided in the table below.

Advantages	Disadvantages
40mph	
Consistency of speed limit for drivers along this section of the A50, therefore less confusion and potentially better compliance	Does not meet criteria for physical measures to ensure compliance therefore relying on driver compliance
Supports DfT guidance aim of seeking to protect local communities	Current recorded speed figures demonstrate that drivers perceive that they should be driving at higher speed on this section of road.
Local community support	"through motorists" lack of support
50mph	
"through motorists" support	Lack of consistency of speed limit (70mph, 40mph, 50mph, 40mph, 70mph from M1 to Markfield Rd) leading to potential confusion for drivers and potentially less compliance with posted speed limit
Better reflects drivers perception of the road environment as demonstrated by current recorded speed figures	Negative impact of higher speeds on local community in terms of quality of life
	Local community lack of support

43. On considering the DfT guidance on speed limits and the results of the recent consultation exercise, the recommendation is to implement a 40mph speed limit on the A50 between Leicester City and the A46 junction and between the Markfield Road junction and Field Head Roundabout. This recommendation seeks to take into account the concerns of local residents affected by A50 traffic speeds on a daily basis, as well as those travelling through who would experience a marginally slower journey time.
44. The overwhelming support for the closure of the gaps in the central reservation and the subsequent recommendation to implement these closures will also assist with quality of life by improving road safety along the A50.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

45. None arising from this report.

Background Papers

46. None.

Appendices

Appendix A – Drawing No. TM4410/5/2016

Appendix B - TM4410/3/2016 and TM4410/4/2016

Appendix C – Summary of consultation responses

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