

Committee	Lead Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment
Date	22 February 2010
Report By	Director of Transport and Environment
Title of Report	Part-time 20mph speed limit for Sutton Avenue/Stejne Road, Seaford
Purpose of Report	To update the Lead Member on progress made with the investigations into a part-time 20mph speed limit on Sutton Avenue and Stejne Road, Seaford

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. To note the contents of the report, and**
 - 2. To request the Director of Transport and Environment to develop and consult on a part-time advisory speed limit on Sutton Avenue and Stejne Road, Seaford in 2010/11, after the anticipated revised guidance on speed limits has been received from the Department for Transport, with a view to implementing the proposed scheme in 2011/12.**
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1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 There are no specific financial implications in respect of the recommendations detailed in this report. The cost of implementing an advisory limit is likely to be in the region of £50,000 and will be a candidate for inclusion in the capital programme allocation for Speed Management in 2011/12.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 At the County Council meeting on 31 March 2009, Councillor Murphy presented a petition to the Chairman calling on East Sussex County Council to construct a 20mph safety zone in the area of Annecy Catholic Primary School, Seaford Head Community College and Micklefield Nursery School to provide a safe route for children travelling to and from school.

2.2 The petition was considered at the Lead Member meeting on 27 July 2009, and the recommendation was to authorise officers to investigate the feasibility of a part-time speed limit on these roads, and to report to a future Lead Member meeting with their findings.

3. Comments / Appraisal

3.1 Investigations undertaken so far have indicated that a mandatory variable speed limit would not be appropriate, due to the difficulties of achieving cost-effective signing that is legally enforceable. Legislation states that a mandatory speed limit must be signed on both sides of the road, and it would be necessary to provide terminal signs on each of the side roads, together with repeater signing at regular intervals. Research has shown that the variable message signs that are approved by DfT typically cost in the region of £4000 per sign. At least 20 of these signs would be required on Sutton Avenue/Stejne Road to sign the limit correctly, which would make a scheme of this size excessively expensive. There are also potential issues with regard to the enforcement of a part-time mandatory speed limit.

3.2 Investigations into part-time speed limits implemented by other local authorities revealed that they had implemented these limits on an advisory basis. This removes the need for repeater signing, and would enable us to install signing only where it is required either side of the schools. The Isle of Wight Council have implemented part-time advisory speed limits and analysis of the before and after speed data shows that they have been very successful in reducing vehicle speeds during the peak hours (Appendix A).

3.3 The Isle of Wight Council have implemented their part-time variable speed limits with variable message signs (Appendix B), although those speed limits are considerably shorter than the proposed limit in Seaford. West Sussex County Council have implemented several advisory limits using yellow backed signs with flashing amber beacons (Appendix B), indicating that drivers should drive at 20mph when the lights flash. This would be a far more cost effective solution for a longer limit such as that proposed for Sutton Avenue/Steyne Road. The signs would however require special authorisation from the DfT, as this is not a standard sign.

3.4 Officers have investigated the extent of the proposed limit and agree that it should cover the length of the Sutton Avenue and Steyne Road that includes the three schools, together with sections of Southdown Road and Arundel Road. The proposed extent of the limit and suggested sign locations are shown in Appendix C.

3.5 The Department for Transport are currently consulting on their revised guidance on setting local speed limits. Under the proposed changes, there is a greater emphasis on 20mph zones and limits. It would be premature to proceed with the development and public consultation on a part-time 20mph speed limit before that final guidance has been released.

4 Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation

4.1 The proposals described in this report will help to emphasise the message of the need to drive more slowly at school arrival and departure times. It is, therefore, recommended that officers should proceed with developing a part-time advisory speed limit for Sutton Avenue/Steyne Road in the 2010/11 financial year, taking into account any changes in the DfT guidance which is expected to be released during the year. It is recommended that officers should then consult on the proposed scheme, including obtaining special authorisation for the suggested signing, and proceed with implementing the proposals in 2011/12, subject to funding being available.

RUPERT CLUBB
Director of Transport and Environment
17 February 2010

Contact Officer: Michael Oates
Local Member: Councillor Lambert

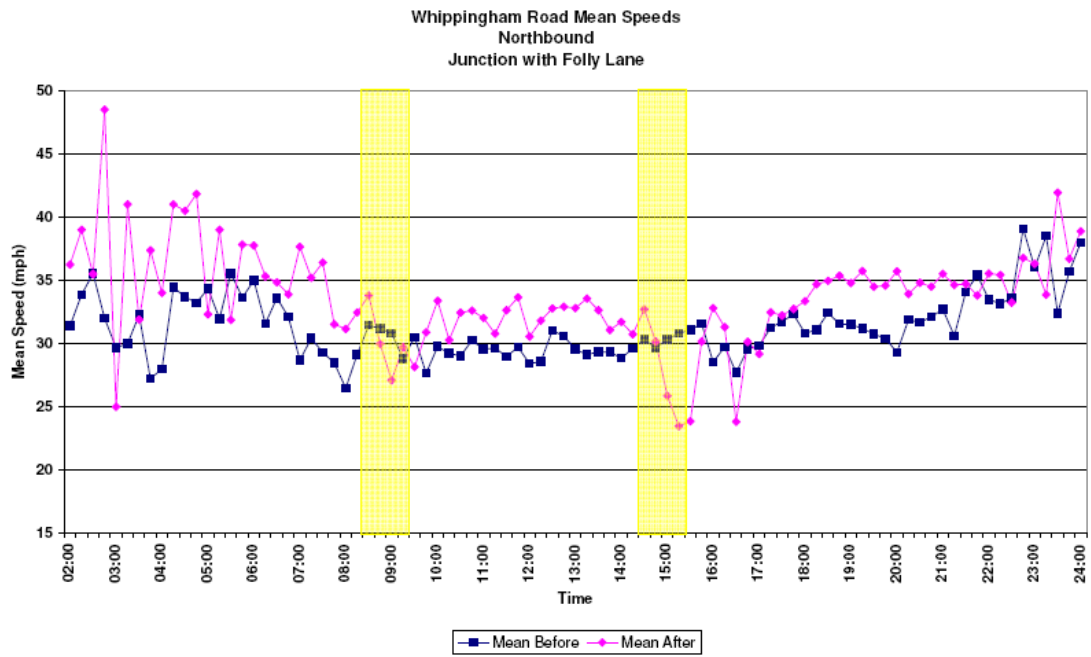
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Appendix A – Isle of Wight before/after study
Appendix B – Illustrations of types of signing
Appendix C – Proposed extent and signing of limit

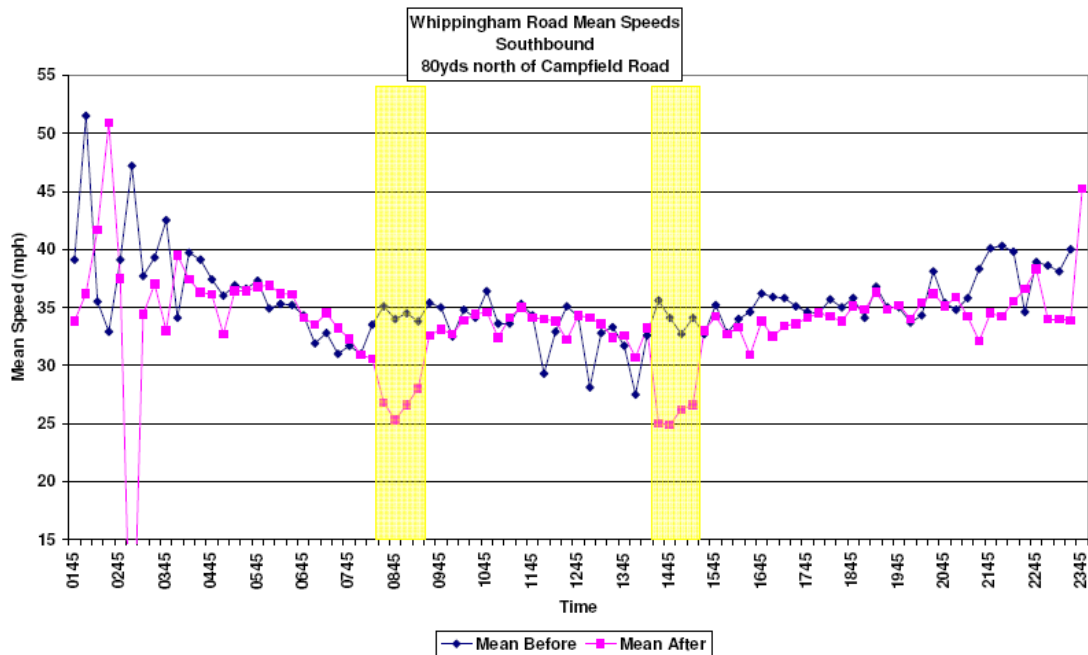
Appendix A – Before and After comparisons for Isle of Wight example

Mean speed of vehicles over a typical weekday in a 40mph limit, on the A3021

Northbound traffic



Southbound traffic



Appendix B – types of sign



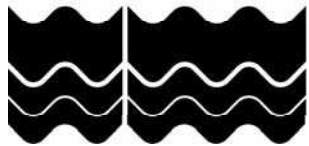
Photo 1 – Variable message sign (Isle of Wight)



Photo 2 – flashing amber beacons (West Sussex)



East Sussex
County Council



Appendix C - Sutton Avenue/Stejne Road
Proposed extent of part time advisory 20mph speed limit

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 Proposed extent of limit
 Proposed sign location
 School building

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SCALE	1 : 5000
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DRAWN BY	PW