Proposals to Reduce Speed Limit in Birdham

November 2021

Proposal 1.

This proposal requests the County Local Council to reduce the speed limit through Birdham from the current 40mph to 30mph. The rout covered would be from the start of the 40mph zone adjacent to Sidlesham Lane, splitting at the roundabout at the Shell garage, along Bell Lane to Hundredsteddle Lane, and along the B2179 to the end of the current 40mph zone.

The A286 through Birdham is an extremely busy road, with an annual average daily flow of 17,542 vehicles in 2020, up from 14,840 in 2019 (see Appendix 1). Additionally, many more house are due to be completed in areas which will further increase the traffic through Birdham. This means that the road is extremely unpleasant to walk cycle on, at a time when we wish to encourage both walking and cycling. This is evidenced by the shocking safety record of the A286 through Birdham village. In the last 5 years there have been 18 recorded traffic accidents in Birdham, of which 6 were serious, 3 of them fatal(1 fatality occurred within the last month, so is not included on the source map, Appendix 2).

At the County Council meeting on 12 February, 2010, Councillors voted to amend the speed limit policy. The decision was to:-

- promote the aim to have 30mph in all villages
- remove the requirement to link the decision to actual speeds
- give County Local Committee's (CLC) more scope and opportunities to recommend lower limits, and
- give priority to villages with an existing 40mph limits.

The decision referred to above gives CLC the option to over-ride the national guidance in order to promote a 30mph limit (Appendix 3)

When judged against the national guidance, it appears that

1. The route does not meet the speed assessment, in that the average speed along the route is close to 40mph
2. The length of the proposed limit is 2.2 km, of which 1.3km is developed on 1 side, of which .5km is developed on both sides. This clearly meets the requirement of 50% laid out in the policy.
3. The route length assessment is greater than the 600m required by the policy.

Due to the CLC decision, referred to above, CLCs may promote a change from 40mph to 30mph in villages without associated engineering measures, which would otherwise fall outside of these criteria.

An additional benefit of a speed reduction would be a considerable reduction in noise and air pollution, desirable aims in themselves.

Given that journey times on the road are unpredictable, as the road is often congested, and quite often gridlocked, an increase in journey time of about 40 seconds is unlikely to be significant, against the safety and health benefits that would ensue.

Given the accident record, the vulnerability of road users, including pedestrians (particularly children, the elderly and disabled), cyclists and equestrians, and the sheer volume of traffic, we request the CLC to authorise the reduction of the speed limit through Birdham from 40mph to 30mph.

Proposal 2.

This proposal seeks to reduce the speed limit along Church Lane, Crooked Lane and Westlands Lane from 30mph to 20mph, along with the infrastructure necessary to enforce it.

Both Church Lane and Westlands Lane have no sidewalks. Crooked Lane has a sidewalk on 1 side, and has the village school on it. Church Lane and Crooked Lane are built up on both sides, with side roads leading off. Westlands Lane is very narrow. Parts of Church Lane, including the very dangerous, narrow bend close to the Church, and all of Westlands Lane form part of the Salterns Way, a significant cycle route between Chichester and West Wittering.

The annual average daily flow in 2019, the last year for which measurements are available, was 1682 vehicles (Source: https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/manualcountpoints/946507), which is a considerable number.

Additionally, the anecdotal evidence is that many drivers drive at or above the 30mph, without due consideration to more vulnerable road users

Many pedestrians use these roads, including children walking to school, as well as cyclists and wheelchair users. It is the walking route to the bus stop on the route to Chichester.

Following the announcement that "active travel can make us become more resilient" (Grant Shapps, Secretary of State for Transport, 9 May 2020) the government has published direction under the Traffic Management Act 2004: network management in response to Covid-19 recommending that "local authorities make significant changes to their road layouts to give more space to cyclists and pedestrians". It clearly states that measures should be taken as swiftly as possible to ensure that travel habits do not revert to pre pandemic behaviour.

The new guidance urges local authorities to adjust speed limits to enable walking and cycling. It states that "reducing the speed limit can provide a more attractive and safer environment for walking and cycling". Forward thinking councils around the UK (Lambeth, Manchester, and Waltham Forest) are redesigning road layouts and creating more space for cyclists and pedestrians and it is hoped that similar forward thinking will be evident in West Sussex.

The lockdown has forced changes of behaviour which have proved beneficial in terms of exercise and health, improvements in air quality, reduction in carbon emissions and noise and an improvement in the quality of life.

Part of the drive to mitigate climate change, which is relevant to low lying areas such as Birdham, must be to encourage more walking and cycling, and therefore to redress the balance between car users and other road users.

We therefore request the CLC to authorise the reduction of the speed limit along Church Lane, Crooked Lane and Westlands Lane from 30mph to 20mph.

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Appendix 1.

Source: https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/manualcountpoints/26880

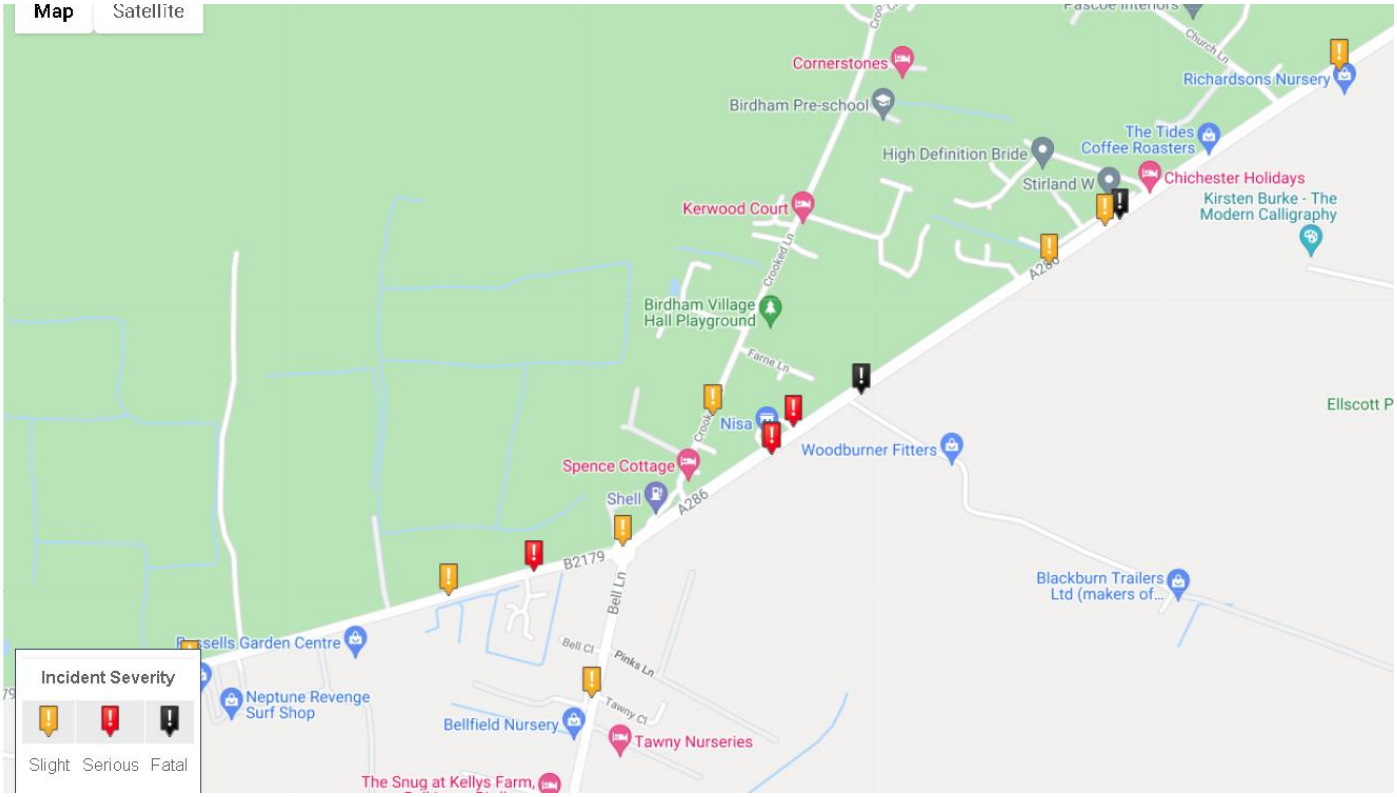
A286

Annual Average daily flow

Year	Count method	Pedal cycles	Two wheeled motor vehicles	Cars and taxis	Buses and coaches	Light goods vehicles	Heavy goods vehicles	All motor vehicles
2020	Manual count	154	111	14379	70	2703	279	17542
2019	Estimated using previous year's AADF on this link	77	97	11709	100	2621	314	14840
2018	Estimated using previous year's AADF on this link	63	90	11683	101	2629	311	14815
2017	Estimated using previous year's AADF on this link	65	92	11739	107	2511	304	14753
2016	Manual count	64	95	11753	110	2373	295	14625
2015	Estimated using previous year's AADF on this link	69	73	10758	134	2753	281	13998
2014	Estimated using previous year's AADF on this link	69	76	10887	131	2571	274	13939

Appendix 2

Source: https://www.crashmap.co.uk



Appendix 3

West Sussex County Council SPEED LIMIT POLICY (2010) 1.

Introduction

1.1 The speed management strategy was adopted in August 2000 and amended in February 2002. The strategy included revised speed limit criteria, supported by Sussex Police, which modified the previous criteria adopted in 1993. Recent guidance from DfT in 2006 has been taken into account in updating the criteria to reflect current views on the setting and evaluation of speed limits. This policy includes criteria for the setting of speed limits. A key objective in the national document is to achieve compliance such that average (mean) speeds are within or close to the set limit.

1.2 Speed limit criteria are used for setting speed limits aimed at responding to speed limit violation and public concern about traffic speed, and contributing towards the overall strategy for speed management as part of the Road Safety Strategy within the West Sussex Transport Plan. The aim is to encourage consistency of setting speed limits throughout the County, to encourage understanding and compliance by drivers. The speed limit criteria incorporate two principal factors for assessment:

- traffic speed (speed assessment)
- character of the route (route assessment)

1.3 Other factors to be taken into account are:

- the length of the route for the speed limit,
- the rate of injury accidents along the route, • other means of intervention to improve safety.

1.4 The impact of the revised criteria will be to enable more appropriate speed limits where people live, particularly in rural villages, and where there are significant numbers of vulnerable road users*, such as outside schools.

1.5 Speed limits should not be used to attempt to solve the problem of isolated hazards, such as a single road junction or reduced forward visibility such as a bend. The setting of speed limits should avoid departure from evidence based proposals leading to the introduction of inappropriate speed limits which are unlikely to be understood or complied with by drivers. This would result in increased numbers of drivers exceeding the posted speed limits, thereby breaking the law, and causing excessive resource implications for enforcement.

*Note: Vulnerable road users include pedestrians (particularly children, the elderly and disabled), cyclists and equestrians.

1.6 However County Councillors consider that not enough is being done to address the concerns of residents in villages. Therefore at the County Council meeting on 12 February, 2010, Councillors voted to amend the policy. The decision was to:-

- promote the aim to have 30mph in all villages
- remove the requirement to link the decision to actual speeds
- give CLCs more scope and opportunities to recommend lower limits, and
- give priority to villages with an existing 40mph.

1.7 The following policy and criteria reflects the national guidance, except relating to villages with 40mph limits where the decision referred to in 1.6 above gives CLC the option to over-ride it in order to promote a 30mph limit.

2. Revised Criteria- Assessment

2.1 Speed Assessment.

The average (mean**) speeds appropriate for each speed limit are shown in Table 1. Note that the measurement of the existing average speed is rounded down to the nearest whole number before applying the specific criteria. (For example an average speed of 41.9 mph or less would qualify for a 40 mph limit).

Table 1 SPEED ASSESSMENT

Speed Limit	60	50	40	30	20
Average Speed to be below	62	52	42	33	24

**Note: The term "mean speed" is a statistical reference and to avoid being over technical the term "average speed" is used instead.

2.2 Route Assessment

The route assessment is attached as Table 2 below. Key features are:

- For a 20mph limit, existing average speeds should be within the criteria, or measures should be provided to ensure that the criteria are met for the new limit.
- For a 30mph limit there should be at least 30% of the route length with frontage development on both sides of the road, or 50% of the route length with frontage development on one side of the road. In villages this may be interpreted as at least 20 properties having direct, individual access along the route (within a length of 600m or 400m, see Route Length Assessment below).
- For a 40mph limit there should be some frontage and/or frequent bends, junctions or accesses with regular daily use indicating a degree of potential conflict along the route.
- For a 50 mph limit there is no specific requirement for frontage access. Routes would be of a rural or suburban nature with few vulnerable road users present.

2.3 Route Length Assessment

The recommended minimum route length for a speed limit is 600m. In exceptional circumstances this may be reduced to 400m, for example when considering a compact village location along a route, or where appropriate as a "buffer" length to provide a transition to a much lower limit. If a buffer length of intermediate limit is provided, the maximum recommended length is 800m. Where multiple changes of speed limit occur along a route, intermediate lengths should not be less than 600m. The objective should be to achieve a balance between providing reasonable consistency of speed limit along the route and the need to encourage awareness of lower speed limits appropriate for key sections of the route where risks are higher.

2.4 Injury Accident Rate

Routes with persistently high numbers of injury accidents will continue to be assessed for speed management including lower speed limits where other measures alone are insufficient to improve road

safety. The existing weighting system (3 for fatal, 2 for serious, and 1 for slight injury) will continue to be used in assessing the "weighted casualty rate per kilometre". Route lengths with the highest weighted casualty rates per kilometre will be given priority for consideration of lower speed limits. In addition the "risk rating", measured as the number of fatal and serious accidents per billion vehicle kilometres, will also be considered when assessing priorities for intervention.

3. Intervention and Application of the Criteria

3.1 If the assessment criteria are not directly met the following factors may be taken into account:

- When the frontage aspect of the route assessment criteria is not met, but the area is of a sensitive or special nature or where there is significant risk to vulnerable road users, and the speed assessment criterion is met, then a lower limit may be considered.
- When the speed assessment criterion has not been met, but the route assessment criteria are met, if associated engineering or other speed reducing measures can be implemented to bring down average speeds sufficient so that the speed assessment criterion is met then a lower limit can be implemented.

3.2 A site would meet the criteria for a speed limit if:

- the speed assessment criterion (Para. 2.1) is met; or
- any necessary additional measures can be funded and implemented to ensure that the speed assessment criterion is met; and
- the route assessment criterion (Para. 2.2) is met; and
- the route length assessment criterion (Para. 2.3) is met.

3.3 Subject also to 3.2 above, a high casualty rate (see 2.4 above) would contribute to the justification of a lower limit of 50 mph, or exceptionally 40 mph, on rural roads.

3.4 Due to the decision, referred to in 1.6 above, CLCs may promote a change from 40mph to 30mph in villages without associated engineering measures which would otherwise fall outside of these criteria.

March 2010 Table 2 ROUTE ASSESSMENT

SPEED LIMIT / CHARACTER OF ENVIRONMENT	TYPE AND CHARACTER OF ROAD AND TRAFFIC COMPOSITION
20 mph Speed Limit or Zone	
Access and local distributor roads. Residential, housing estates, shopping streets or routes near schools may be considered.	Either engineering measures have been undertaken to ensure that the average speed will be below 24 mph or the existing conditions control speed sufficiently. High proportion of vulnerable road users*.
30 mph Speed Limit	

Built up / partially built up areas. Properties with frontage access, e.g. schools, private and commercial premises. Proportion of route length with frontage / access usually exceeding 30% on both sides of the road, or 50% on one side of the road. May include less developed lengths between 30 limits which are too short for a higher limit.	(i) Urban streets. (ii) Roads through villages and identified rural settlements. Significant numbers of vulnerable road users*.
40 mph Speed Limit	
Partially built up areas with limited frontage access, or route lengths with frequent bends, junctions or accesses. May include undeveloped lengths between existing speed limits of 30 and 40, 40 and 40, or 40 and 50mph which are too short for a higher limit.	(i) Urban distributor roads. (ii) Roads through villages and identified rural settlements. (iii) Lengths of rural road identified as high risk and/or having high accident rates. A noticeable presence of vulnerable road users*.