



20mph speed limit policy

Summary

1. Local highway authorities are “*encouraged to introduce 20 mph zones or limits into streets which are primarily residential in nature; and into town or city streets where pedestrian and cyclist movements are high, such as around schools, shops, markets, playgrounds and other areas; where these are not part of any major through route.*” (Speed limit circular DfT 2009)
2. The same circular also states that the DfT “*wants to make it clearer that highway authorities have flexibility in the use of 20 mph zones and limits, and should apply the option best suited to the local circumstances and that brings most benefits in terms of casualty reductions and wider community benefits.*”
3. This policy defines the set of guiding principles that will be used in York to influence decisions about the setting of 20 miles per hour ‘signed only’ speed limits on roads over which the City of York Council acts as the Highway Authority.
4. The policy covers four main areas:
 - Coverage - where the policy is to be applied.
 - Inclusion and exclusions - which roads are included and which excluded
 - Signing policy - the principles of the implementation of the policy
 - Delivery - how the policy will be delivered

Policy Approach

5. The policy defines a high level procedural approach to the setting of new 20mph limits. The key steps in this procedure are
 - Split the city into sectors
 - Subdivide each sector into the main residential areas

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- Apply inclusions by road type
- Apply exclusions by road type
- Raise exceptions to inclusion and exclusion using existing evidence base
- Collect new speed data for exceptions and general scheme monitoring
- Review exceptions
- Redefine area boundaries where necessary
- Draft the signing plans according to signing policy
- Produce the draft area plans for consultation
- Review
- Apply marketing and communication strategy
- Consultation and revision
- Advertise traffic order
- Implement signing scheme
- Undertake monitoring and evaluation

Coverage

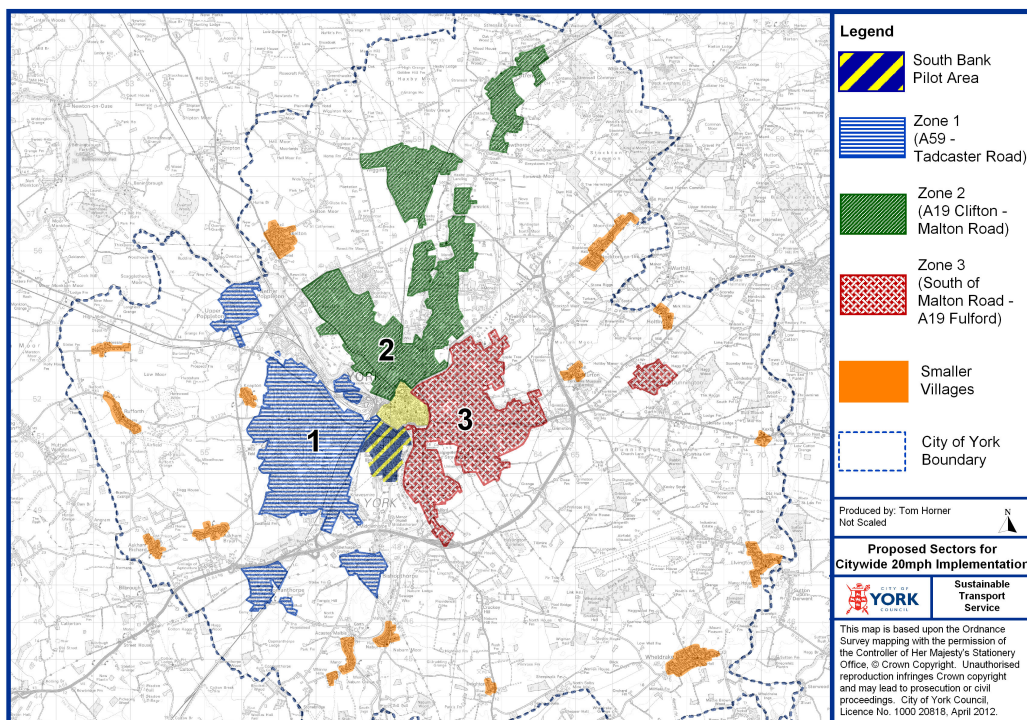
6. DfT Circular 01/2006 'Setting of Local speed Limits' states that *"Traffic authorities have the flexibility to set local speed limits that are right for the individual road, reflecting local needs and taking account of all local considerations..."* and that *"Speed limits should be evidence-led, self-explaining and seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel. Speed limits should encourage self-compliance ..."*
7. The setting of appropriate speed limits, including signed only 20 mph limits, is at the discretion of the local traffic authority. However when setting these limits the advice from government is that the process should be evidence led in order that the set limits encourage self-compliance.
8. There are two main considerations that need to be taken into account when deciding which roads are appropriate for setting of a 20 mph speed limit:
 - 'the roads physical characteristics' - its nature
 - 'how the road relates to its area' - its context

Between them, these help the policy implementers understand how people will respond to the new lower limit both as residents, and users. This local understanding of individual road character needs to be used to make the decision about whether the new limit is

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appropriate. If the nature and context of the road is such that it does not encourage slower driving speeds it is unlikely that a signed only limit will succeed in achieving the desired reductions in speeds. Setting of inappropriate speed limits increases the level of non-compliance, risks bringing the law into disrepute and will inevitably lead to additional demands for enforcement and pressure on policing resource and should therefore be avoided.

- Initially the city will be split into three sectors; West of the River Ouse, Northern Sector and South-Eastern sector (plan 1). A phased implementation within each sector will take place over the next three to four years. Villages will be treated as separate areas, given that signed only speed limits may not be an appropriate method of reducing speed in these locations. The larger settlements will be covered by this policy, these being, Haxby, Wigginton, Strensall, Upper and Nether Poppleton, Bishopthorpe, Copmanthorpe and Dunnington. The remaining, smaller, villages will be treated on a bespoke basis after the urban area and larger villages have been completed.



Plan 1: Sectors: (all maps reproduced under licence from the Ordnance Survey: CYC Licence number 1000 20818)

- Each sector will be subdivided into sub-areas defining the main grouping of primarily residential settlement. A combination of GIS digital mapping, aerial photography combined with local knowledge

will be used to help identify and define the boundaries of the extents of these areas see figs 1,2,3 and 4.

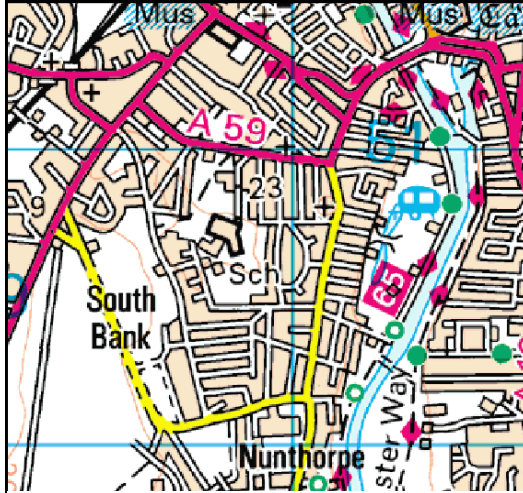


Figure 1 OS Mapping

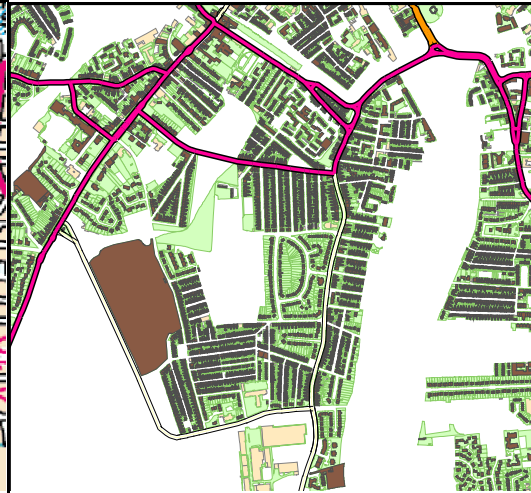


Figure 2 OS Master Map

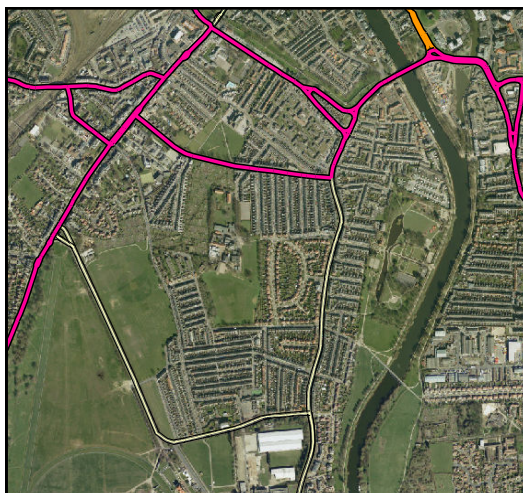


Figure 3 Aerial Photography

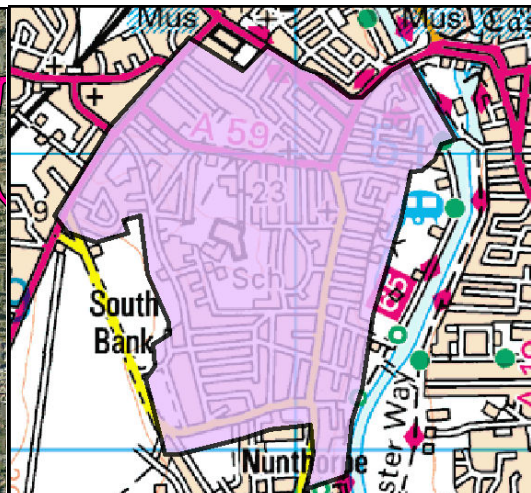


Figure 4 Area extent defined

Inclusion and exclusions

11. The Ordnance Survey defines in the 'Integrated Transport Network™ Layer' (ITN) a hierarchy of road definitions. These definitions include; A Roads, B Roads and 'Minor Roads' along with 'Local Streets' (Figure 5). The A, B and Minor classifications of road form the more strategic road network and the more major through routes. The ITN definitions do not fully take into account local factors, such as bus and emergency routes. The ITN definitions will be used as a consistent starting point for deciding on the initial inclusion or exclusion of roads under the policy.

- Local Streets, as defined in the ITN layer, forming the majority of residential road network in the defined areas will in general be included in the 20 mph limit, whereas roads with other classifications forming the strategic network will initially be excluded.

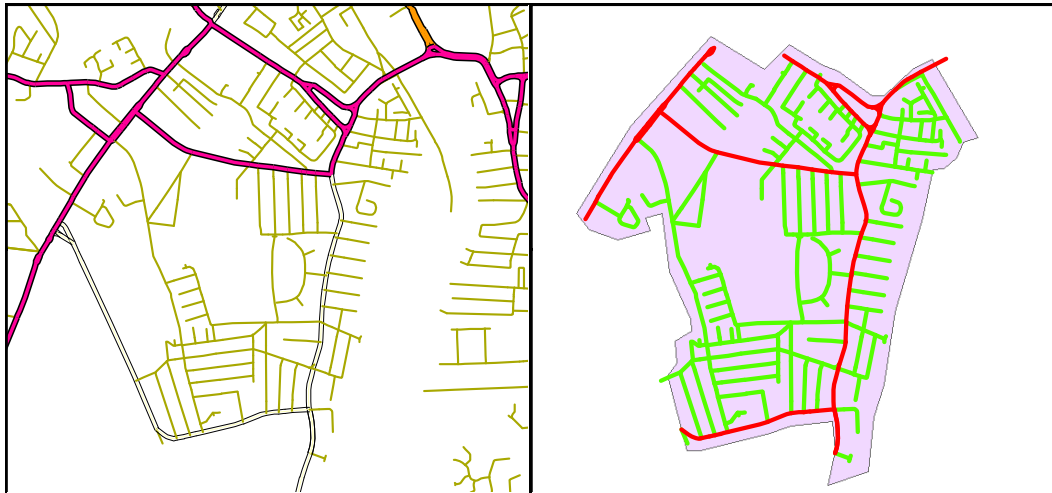


Figure 5 ITN Road Hierarchy

Figure 6 A, B, and Minor Roads excluded (red)
'Local Streets' included (green)

Exceptions

- A, B and minor roads can be included in the 20 mph limit, but only 'by exception'. The case for exception is where these roads are of a nature and character where they would form clear 'natural extensions' to adjacent residential areas which will become (or already are) subject to a 20 mph limit under the policy. A natural extension is defined by having an adjacency, or through its use, such as high pedestrian or cyclist activity. The decision to make an exception will be taken by council officers in consultation with the police based primarily on empirical evidence, although it will take into account results of public consultation and cabinet member view via 'officer in joint consultation'.
- It is necessary that any road considered for inclusion has average speeds that are already low. Current guidance suggests that average speeds need to be 24mph or less for the successful introduction of a signed only speed limit. If significantly higher speeds are indicated then it will be necessary to implement additional speed reduction measures. These speed reduction measures might include additional signing, gateway features, road narrowing and traffic islands. Where additional measures are

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deemed necessary and the road is to be included in the 20mph speed limit policy the measures will be monitored post implementation to ensure their efficacy. This applies to both the local streets included by default and to the exceptions. In cases where higher speeds are indicated on local streets they will also require an exception report. It should be noted that implementation will be on a signage only basis. The citywide roll out of 20mph streets will therefore, initially, be progressed on the understanding that no additional speed reduction measures will be part of a scheme for residential roads not included under the exception procedure. Therefore, for a road with higher than recommended speeds to be included three criteria must be met. These being; the road must be residential in nature or a clear natural extension to adjacent residential areas, funding must be available for additional speed reduction measures and council officers and the police must agree that any proposed speed reduction measures and 20mph speed limit could achieve speeds of, or at least very close to 20mph.

15. Evidence from speed detection radar logging devices, GPS average speed tracking, police monitoring and the accident record will be used to influence the decision to include or exclude roads from the limit.
16. If speeds on included roads fail to reduce to an acceptable level post implementation of limit they will remain on the exception list and their inclusion reviewed according to criteria and timescales set out in the 'exception report'.

Exception Reporting

17. In cases of exception an 'exception report' will detail:
 - The reason(s) for inclusion (or exclusion)
 - Evidence of speed and accidents
 - Any measures taken to reduce speeds
 - Any targets for speed reduction
 - Future monitoring regime
 - Future action to be taken should speeds not reach targets
 - Timetable for the above

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The decision to make an exception will be made in consultation with the police and will take into account the views of local residents and other people affected.

Sign Policy

18. All new signage will be in accordance with the 'Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions' and follow the advice provided in Chapter 3 of the 'Traffic Signs Manual'.
19. It is a requirement in the TSM to sign the change of speed limit with 'terminal signs' and to have repeater signs placed at regular intervals within the bounds of the limit. The size of the terminal signs is 600mm in diameter positioned on both sides of the highway, within 50m of the start of the limit. The repeater signs need to be 300mm in diameter and placed at regular intervals and usually positioned on alternate sides of the highway. There is some flexibility within TSM on the required spacing of the repeater signs to meet the requirement of 'regular' repeater signage.
20. The policy to be adopted is that 20 mph repeater signs will be placed in line with or more frequently than the recommended maximum spacing on the longer sections of road (greater than 300m). Signs will usually be placed on alternate sides of the road.
21. Roads shorter than 300 meters in length will have the following policy applied:
 - Roads that are no-through routes to general traffic that spur off roads that are subject to a speed limit higher than 20mph will normally be excluded from the policy although they may be included by exception.
 - No-through routes that spur off existing or proposed roads subject to a 20 mph limit. The decision to place repeater signs will be made at the discretion of the highway authority, taking into account local road conditions and residents opinions. Shorter and 'access only' roads for example may not always require repeater signs.
22. Where repeater signs are deemed appropriate for shorter roads the first sign will be placed towards the end of the road that most traffic uses (usually the more major road).

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23. Existing 20mph zones and limits will be incorporated into the new limits. The signing on entry to zones will remain as is but the sign indicating end of the zone will require changing to 20mph as per chapter 3 of the DfT Traffic Signs Manual.
24. Existing 'traffic calmed' streets (including home zones) will keep their physical traffic calming measures.

Policy on 'Sign Clutter'

25. Every effort will be made to minimise the number of signs required. Additional signs may be required should the signage not achieve the desired reduction in speeds following review.
26. Where practicable signs will be placed on existing street furniture mainly on street lighting columns. Installation of any new signs on poles will follow the current signing policy.
27. Changes in sign regulations mean that some of the existing signs on the highway in the city are now no longer required. A review of the existing signs in each area will be made and these redundant signs identified for removal. Towards the city centre the density of regulations and existing signs means that the schemes can achieve 'signing neutrality', with as many signs identified for removal as are put up. In the suburbs and towns this may not be possible.
28. A sign installation specification will be developed for the new signage. This 'good practice guide' will include;
 - Use of security fixings to reduce the possibility of theft and twisted signs.
 - Consistent mounting heights for the signs, so that signs are at a regular height.
 - Detail the pole colour and size (in line with emerging 'Reinvigorate York' design guidance).
 - Detail the sign mounting detail so that for example poles do not protrude above the top of the sign.

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Attention to detail and care in installation is important so that signs have minimum detracting from the street environment.

Delivery

29. Providing funding is available a phased delivery will take place over the next three years:
 - Sector 1, West of the river Ouse, 2012/13
 - Sector 2, A19 North to Malton Road 2013
 - Sector 3, Malton Road to Fulford Road 2014

Consultation

Within each sector a phased delivery will take place. It is proposed that full details of the programme of works and consultation will be published online in advance of each phase of the delivery.

Marketing and Communication

30. In parallel with the physical delivery of the scheme a marketing and communication strategy will be implemented to support the consultation and delivery of each phase of the policy.
31. The focus of the strategy is on winning 'hearts and minds', encouraging compliance with the new limit by drivers and promoting understanding of how the policy contributes towards improving the quality of the places where we live. It will do this by delivering information about the scheme its aims and through the application of social media.

References:

DfT Call for comment on Speed Limit Circular December 2009
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roadsafety/speed-limits/pdf/guidance.pdf>

DfT "Setting Local Speed Limits" August 2008
<http://www.dft.gov.uk/topics/road-safety/speed-management>

DfT "Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 3 – Regulatory Signs