

**Decision Session – Executive Member For
Transport and Planning**

12 April 2018

Report of the Corporate Director of Economy and Place

Strensall Road Speed limit - Update

Summary

1. This report provides details of the investigation into reducing the speed limit to 40mph on the rural road between Earswick and Strensall. The Executive Member is asked to note the contents of the report and make a decision as to whether the speed limit should be reduced.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked to:

Option1: Note the contents of the summary report and retain the derestricted section of highway between Earswick and Strensall as recommended.

Reason: There is little evidence that the existing speed limit makes the road dangerous and reducing the limit as requested is unlikely to have any impact on vehicle speeds.

Background

3. A petition to reduce the speed limit to 40mph on Strensall Road between Earswick and Strensall was received by City of York Council and considered by the Executive Member for Transport and Planning at a decision session on 13 April 2017. At the meeting the decision was taken that the issue be considered as part of the annual danger reduction measures across the city. It was therefore added to the 17/18 Danger Reduction programme.
4. An investigation was undertaken which resulted in a briefing report to the Head of Transport (**Annex A**). This report recommended that the

speed limit remain at 60mph. The contents of this report were discussed at Transport Board and the report was referred to Executive Member for a decision.

Consultation

5. North Yorkshire Police were asked for comment on the request and provided the following:

North Yorkshire Police follows the DfT guidelines on setting speed limits, as do North Yorkshire County Council and the City of York Council, this ensures a fair and consistent approach and removes any ambiguity and can withstand scrutiny. The basic principal is that in order for a speed limit to work there must be significant roadside development with associated accesses, the guidelines specify what speed limits are appropriate for what density of development. A speed limit without the appropriate degree of development is likely to fail without significant police enforcement which is not sustainable.

Additionally, there are no records of injury accidents on the road for the past 3 years, this, combined with lack of significant roadside development mean that North Yorkshire Police would not support the application to reduce the speed limit on Strensall Road.

Options

6. Option 1: Note the contents of the summary report and retain the derestricted section of highway between Earswick and Strensall as recommended.

Option 2: Reduce the speed limit to 40mph creating a consistent 40mph limit from Earswick to Strensall.

Analysis

7. National guidance for setting local speed limits is included in DfT circular 01/2013. This advises that the mean and 85th percentile speeds are used as the main basis for setting local speed limits.
8. The data collected and analysed for the investigation (available as part of **Annex A**) illustrates that the existing limit is working well. Mean speeds were recorded as 39mph southbound and 42mph northbound and 85th percentile speeds (the speed that 85 percent of vehicles do not

exceed) recorded as 45mph southbound and 49mph northbound. This indicates that the vast majority of drivers are not exceeding the limit.

9. The recorded mean speeds are in line with vehicle speeds expected in a 40mph limit, however the 85th percentile speeds are a little on the high side especially for northbound traffic. These higher 85th percentile speeds suggest that drivers may continue to drive at these speeds if a simple change to the signed limit were introduced. This means that residents and road users are unlikely to see any visible difference in speeds, which in turn would likely lead to calls for enforcement on a road which currently has no speeding or accident problems.
10. The comments from North Yorkshire Police concur with this evaluation of the road and the recommendation to retain the 60mph limit.
11. The other factor to consider when setting a rural speed limit is the environment. A 40mph in a rural area should include bends, junctions or accesses, substantial development, a strong environmental or landscape reason, or where there are considerable numbers of vulnerable road users. The section in question has 17 accesses over its 700m length and has a number of properties both residential and agricultural in nature. However, there is little evidence that the speed limit makes exiting these accesses difficult or dangerous.
12. To make the environment suitable for a 40mph limit significant layout changes would be needed. However, the road is a primary route linking Strensall to the northern ring road and is therefore unsuitable for traffic calming. The only remaining option would be realignment of the road to provide bends. This would be extremely expensive and require compulsory purchase of land bounding the road, so is not considered feasible.

Council Plan

13. The potential implications for the priorities in the Council Plan are:

A council that listens to residents: The investigation was initiated by a petition from local residents and whilst the recommendation of the report doesn't support the original request it does demonstrate that CYC is a council that listens to residents and considers their requests for local change.

Implications

14.

- **Financial** – The cost of advertising a speed limit change and amending the signage is estimated at £2.5k and is affordable under the Danger Reduction budget.
- **Human Resources (HR)** - There are no Human Resources implications.
- **One Planet Council / Equalities** - There are no One Planet Council / Equalities implications.
- **Legal** - There are no Legal implications.
- **Crime and Disorder** - There are no Crime and Disorder implications.
- **Information Technology (IT)** - There are no Information Technology implications.
- **Property** - There are no Property implications.
- **Other** - Implications for North Yorkshire Police if the speed limit is reduced and they are called to enforce the lower limit.

Risk Management

15. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy, the following risks associated with the recommendations in this report have been identified and described in the following points, and set out in the table below:
16. Authority reputation – this risk is in connection with the public perception of the Council if the speed limit is not reduced following the receipt of a petition asking for this to be done and is assessed at 10.

Risk Category	Impact	Likelihood	Score
Organisation/ Reputation	Minor	Probable	10

17. As detailed in the report a reduction of the speed limit would have a negligible effect on vehicle speeds which would potentially have a more substantial impact on the reputation of the organisation. Due to this reasoning the risk associated with maintaining the current limit is consider acceptable.

Contact Details

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Report **Date** 23.03.18
Approved

Wards Affected: Strensall

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Decision Session – Executive Member for Transport Planning 13/04/2017:
Strensall Road Petition for Speed Limit Reduction

Annexes

Annex A – Briefing Note: Danger Reduction Scheme – Strensall Rd, Speed limit reduction

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

CYC – City of York Council

DfT – Department for Transport.