

20mph Speed Limit Pilot Areas

Summary

1. This report identifies a proposal to progress the creation of an extended area of 20mph speed limits to the south west of the city centre as part of the development of a citywide 20mph speed limit policy. Such an extension is in line with the Labour Party manifesto promise to introduce citywide 20mph speed limits on residential roads across York.
2. The introduction of a 20mph limit covering the majority of the South Bank area had previously been approved as part of a trial 20mph area however potential changes to policy could have led to abortive work being implemented. It is now proposed to use an extended area to facilitate the development of a new policy for the city. This new approach will enable practical delivery considerations to be incorporated into the policy development whilst addressing a clear desire by residents for slower speeds in the area.
3. Also for consideration is the possibility of using Murton as a 20mph speed limit pilot for villages. The report will also mention recently announced changes in signage requirements to 20mph speed limits. Annex A shows the proposed expanded 20mph speed limit area.
4. This new approach to delivering lower speeds in residential areas will involve promotion of the positive aspects of 20mph limits to encourage a change in attitudes and culture across the city. A policy and implementation strategy report is planned to be submitted to the Cabinet Member in October.

Background

5. The South Bank 20mph speed limit trial Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was advertised on 11th November 2010 and is ready for implementation. The boundary of the area covered is shown in annex A. The signage for that scheme is fully ordered and ready for installation, however, due to the change of council administration, it was felt appropriate to temporarily suspend the scheme as there was a risk of abortive work being undertaken. This decision was taken because an expanded scheme would significantly change the location of the entry signs.
6. Informal and formal consultation took place in the South Bank area prior to the scheme being readied for implementation. Informal consultation showed 75% of respondents to be in favour of the 20mph speed limits. The formal consultation yielded ten objections to the scheme; these were overturned at an Officer in Consultation meeting in January 2011.
7. A petition was presented at Council on 9th December 2010 requesting that Bishopthorpe Road and adjacent streets in the South Bank area be made subject to 20mph speed limits. When added to the South Bank trial site this petition creates a well-contained area that could be the beginning of a phased implementation of 20mph speed limits on residential roads across York.
8. Bishopthorpe Road is made up of a several distinct areas, including predominantly shopping and residential areas and a variety of widths ranging from narrow with no parking through to wide with parking on both sides of the road. There are also key pedestrian and cycling crossing points. e.g. Butcher Terrace area through to Millennium Bridge.
9. Murton is classified as a small village in the Draft Local Development Framework Sustainable Settlement Hierarchy. A petition was presented at Council on 7th October 2010 calling for 20mph speed limits in the village. This petition was exceptionally well supported, with a large majority of households in the village supporting a change of speed limit.
10. On previous 20mph speed limit schemes informal consultation has been undertaken to establish resident opinion in the area prior to advertising a TRO. The TRO advertisement is a legal

requirement and provides the formal element of speed limit consultation. In Murton, given the petition is so strongly supported, the TRO could be advertised without the need for the informal consultation.

11. There is a subtle difference between types of 20mph speed limit regulation. A brief overview is shown below to ensure clarity.
12. 20mph Speed Limit – A road, part of a road, or a number of roads that is/are subject to a maximum speed limit of 20mph and is indicated using 20mph signs at the entry points to the area covered by the speed limit in addition to smaller repeater signs within the area. No physical traffic calming (i.e. speed humps or chicanes) forms part of a 20mph speed limit. It is worth noting that should traffic calming be already in place then existing features can be retained if a 20mph speed limit is to be implemented on a road.
13. 20 mph Zone – A road, part of a road, or a number of roads that is/are subject to a maximum speed limit of 20mph and is indicated using 20mph signs at the entry points to the area covered by the speed limits and has traffic calming features at regular intervals within the boundary of the zone.
14. Traffic calming is the most effective way of controlling speed in urban areas (Mackie 1998). However, traffic calming has a high cost attached and for all residential roads in the city it would be unaffordable and also, undesirable (given the low popularity of speed humps and impact on key routes). 20mph speed limits typically achieve a small decrease in speeds. They are however, relatively cheap to implement and as such, can make it possible for larger areas to be subject to lower speeds.
15. The most recent Department for Transport (Dft) information on signage (9th June 2011) enhances the options available for implementing 20mph speed limits. Highway authorities will be able to use 20mph roundels painted on the road instead of repeater signs (where required) if Council authorises this approach. A basic 20mph roundel is of a similar cost to a repeater sign and can be used in areas where additional signage would be significantly detrimental to the environment. The recent Dft information does also state “It remains the decision of local councils to decide whether or not to use 20

mph schemes following robust cost-benefit analysis of any such proposals.”

16. Portsmouth, the location of the UK’s first citywide 20mph scheme, introduced 20mph speed limits in 2008. The following key lessons were identified in the evaluation report for the scheme:
 - Publicity, using community engagement and the media, is pivotal to gaining public acceptance/support for the scheme;
 - Carrying out a survey and design of each road separately by staff with knowledge of the relevant legislation is key to ensuring suitability of the road environment for implementing 20 mph speed limits;
 - A comprehensive checking or sign review process should be put in place following implementation, to ensure that signs have been correctly installed and meet legal requirements;
 - Local authorities should ensure that appropriate governance arrangements are in place, for the robust management of the scheme. A Project/ Stakeholder Board should be set up at the outset to guide and direct the implementation of the scheme;
 - Engagement of stakeholders through the design and implementation of the scheme in order to gain public support and acceptance. For instance better engagement of bus operators and emergency services in order to identify key routes for a coordinated approach is encouraged which would in turn promote closer working relationships;
 - The scheme should be based on robust evidence of casualty saving benefits that should be outlined in the early stages of scoping the scheme; and
 - There should be a plan for facilitating post-implementation feedback for 20 mph limit only roads where initial speeds are high.¹

Consultation

17. It is proposed to consult residents of the area and key stakeholders on the principles of the expanded South Bank and Murton schemes as part of the policy development stage. Initial consultation with stakeholders would be progressed immediately.

¹ Taken from: Interim Evaluation of the Implementation of 20mph Speed Limits in Portsmouth, Atkins, 2010.

Proposal

18. Deliver 20mph speed limits in two pilot areas in the city as part of, and to inform, the development of the citywide policy. See Annex A.

Analysis

19. The extended scheme provides a more complete boundary of the area to the South West of the city centre and allows for the inclusion of additional residential areas within the 20mph speed limit. This area could form phase one of citywide 20mph speed limits as much of the area is well advanced for implementation.
20. Bishopthorpe Road is a key radial route and as such, has high flows of traffic. Around 720 vehicles use the section of Bishopthorpe Road near the former Terry's factory between 8am and 9am on a weekday, rising to 1150 vehicles at Bishopthorpe shops. Scarcroft Road is also relatively heavily trafficked (approx. 650 vehicles per am peak hour) with a variety of road widths and surrounding environments including housing, parking areas, allotments, open space etc.
21. The average speeds on the section of Bishopthorpe Road included in the possible boundary are 26mph (northbound) and 29mph (southbound) measured close to Rectory Gardens.
22. As part of the consultation and design process imaginative ways to create an environment to reduce speeds in the area will be investigated. Initial investigation suggests that subtle changes in road character have successfully reduced speed levels on Fishergate. The most effective location for the 20mph speed limit entry points will also need to be determined.
23. It should be noted that in Portsmouth 62.5% of the roads with before average speeds of over 24mph did not have an average speed of less than or equal to 20mph after the 20mph speed limits were introduced.
24. 35% of motorists are already travelling above the existing 30mph speed limit heading out of the city. If the speed limit reduces to 20mph then it is possible that the numbers travelling above the limit will increase. The current dynamics and appearance of the road do not give the impression that it

would be suited to a 20mph speed limit. Further investigation will be needed to establish the most appropriate location of the entry sign position on Bishopthorpe Road and whether there are any low cost measures such as road markings which could be introduced to change the environment in the higher speed areas.

25. The area immediately around Bishopthorpe Road shops is a vibrant, well-used area and there are shops located on both sides of the road. Lower speeds on Bishopthorpe Road could enhance this shopping area.
26. The extended South Bank boundary would require statutory consultation with all households having a frontage onto the affected streets. The number of households (in addition to those within the already approved South Bank area) affect is approximately 2250. It is anticipated there will be no additional entry point signs required on top of the already approved scheme. Up to 50 further repeater signs will be needed to sign the area to enforceable requirements.
27. To introduce 20mph speed limits in Murton would require three entry points and approximately ten to twelve repeater signs. An additional cost would be incurred through the TRO process so the overall estimated cost for introducing 20mph speed limits in Murton would be £5,000.
28. The support within the village is very high for 20mph speed limits and the cost is relatively low so it could be a suitable village trial. However the speeds on Murton Lane, within the village, are relatively high as shown below:

Direction	To Village	From Village
Date	19 - 26 July 2010	19 - 26 July 2010
Speed Limit	30	30
Mean Speed	31	32
85%ile	36	38
95%ile	39	43
Top Speed	60	68
% above limit	50.5%	59.4%

29. The speeds in the table above show that the average is over the existing limit in both directions. These speeds are

relatively high when considering implementing 20mph speed limits. To bring speeds down from this level to 20mph it would be more effective to introduce traffic-calming features however these are unlikely to be supported by residents, would be expensive and difficult to justify in value for money terms. The possible use of less disruptive lower cost measures to reduce speeds such as road markings and surface treatments will be investigated.

30. The lessons from Portsmouth outlined above suggest that a project board be set up at the outset to ensure robust management of the work. It is important to include key stakeholders in the process at an early stage. This will be set up over the next few months to assist in the development of the strategy for rolling out 20mph speed limits across the city.
31. Establishing a project board at an early stage would allow for discussion on various factors that may hold potential for conflict throughout the process. The key issue surrounding the implementation of 20mph speed limits in the extended South Bank area is the current speed of traffic on part of Bishopthorpe Road. This is likely to be a problem in various other residential locations across the city and early agreement on criteria, surveying and justification (or not) of road inclusion is important.
32. A project board developing a strategy with a view to using the extended South Bank area and Murton as pilot areas in the first phase of citywide 20mph implementation would be the most inclusive and thorough way forward. This will enable the most rapid delivery of 20 mph limits in accordance with the desires of residents of the area whilst ensuring appropriate engagement with key organisations.

Corporate Priorities

33. The contributions to the corporate strategy of 20mph speed limits are dependent on increasing walking and cycling levels. If this occurs then the outcomes of this report will contribute to the sustainable city and green city themes. There is also likely to be a decrease in slight casualties, which would benefit the safer city theme. The proposal will also improve the quality of life of residents in the areas currently blighted by inappropriate traffic speeds.

Implications

34. The following implications have been considered:

- (a) **Financial** An allocation for the delivery of the first phase of the 20mph scheme is to be added to the Capital Programme, subject to approval by the Cabinet Member, at the 26 July Decision Session. Development and funding of the marketing strategy will be supported by the LSTF budget.
- (b) **Human Resources (HR)** No known implications
- (c) **Equalities** No known implications
- (d) **Legal** Traffic Regulation Orders will need to be raised for the proposed speed limit changes. Costs will be minimised by ensuring large areas are progressed at each time.
- (e) **Crime and Disorder** The police will be included at all stages in the preparation of the new policy.
- (f) **Information Technology (IT)** No known implications
- (g) **Property** No known implications
- (h) **Other** None

Risk Management

35. Detailed risk assessments will be developed as the project is progressed. There are several potential risks associated with implementing the extended South Bank and Murton schemes. Successful delivery of the programme is dependent on good relationships with the main stakeholders such as the police and local residents. In particular the delivery of 20mph limits in areas where speeds are currently higher will need careful consideration and support of stakeholders
36. Setting up a project board and devising a clear strategy at an early stage will enable preparation work to be completed, stakeholders to be involved and a clear plan of action to be identified. This will minimise the potential risks to the successful delivery of the programme.

Recommendations

37. The Cabinet Member is recommended to approve the progression of the South Bank and Murton areas as pilots to assist in the development of the new 20mph speed limit policy.

Reason: To ensure that 20mph speed limits are implemented in the city in the most inclusive, coordinated and appropriate way.

Contact Details

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Wards Affected: <i>Micklegate, Osbaldwick</i>			All
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Background Papers:

Interim Evaluation of the Implementation of 20mph Speed Limits in Portsmouth, Atkins, 2010.

Mackie, A. (1998) Urban Speed Management Methods, TRL Report 363.

Annexes

Annex A – Boundary plan for the two areas considered for 20mph speed limits.