

To: Swale Joint Transportation Board

By: Head of Transportation, Kent County Council

Date: 8 December 2014

Subject: Request to reduce the speed limit on the B2006
Staplehurst Road (Sittingbourne) from 50mph to 30mph

Classification: For information

Summary: The report outlines the response to the request for a lower speed limit, highlighting current County Council policy and national guidance.

1. A request has been received from a Mr James Hunt, on behalf of local residents, to lower the speed limit in Staplehurst Road, Sittingbourne from 50mph to 30mph. This request refers to the section of road that lies between the Bobbing Interchange and the railway bridge across the Sheerness branch line.
2. Kent County Council (KCC) receives hundreds of requests every year for new safety improvement schemes, and is focusing its spending on reducing road casualties.
3. Resources available for safety improvements (such as lower speed limits) will only be allocated towards sites where there has been a pattern of personal injury crashes within the last three years, of the type that could be reduced by implementing the works requested.
4. An investigation has been carried out into the current safety record of Staplehurst Road. There is no record of any such pattern of crashes during the last available three years of data. This means that at this moment in time it is not possible to reduce casualties through safety engineering measures, which must instead be targeted at other sites where patterns of crashes have already been identified, and therefore must be addressed first as a higher priority.
5. The result of this investigation has been communicated to Mr Hunt. KCC is fair and consistent in its approach to these issues across the County, and will continue to monitor the safety record in the area and take

whatever action that can be justified, within the budgets that are available at the time.

6. Leaving the funding situation aside, it should also be noted that the introduction of a 30mph speed limit at this location would not meet with current national guidelines for setting local speed limits. Due to the open character of the road with limited built up areas adjacent, there is unlikely to be a satisfactory level of compliance with a 30mph speed limit, and an unrealistically low speed limit could introduce new safety issues where none currently exist.
7. Should alternative funds become available in the future, an extension to the current 40mph speed limit eastwards from the Bobbing Interchange may be feasible for further investigation, but could only be considered if first informed by a seven day traffic survey of current speed levels.

Background documents: None

Annexes

None

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