

Speed limit – Westfield Road, Pitstone

Please find below details of the background of this issue and confirmation of the proposed action that was agreed by Thames Valley Police (TVP) and Buckinghamshire Council (BC) at a site meeting held at Westfield Road on 25th January.

Description of the issue;

The 30mph speed limit on Westfield Road was placed some 18-19 years ago and commenced at a point that coincided with the white village gates at the very edge of the development. The area outside of this being the National Speed Limit (60mph) past the Local Wildlife Site.

However, as part of the adoption process that Taylor Wimpey (TW) are going through, that will facilitate the adoption of Westfield Road (along with the remainder of the whole estate) by BC, it was noted that the absence of any street lighting in the vicinity of the gateway feature identified that the speed limit did not comply with regulations and was not compliant with current legislation and therefore, unenforceable.

To ensure compliance, the speed limit signs were moved, over the weekend of 16-17th January, to a point that coincided with the last street lamp positioned on Westfield Road. This places them 10 to 15 metres from the centreline of the Warwick Road junction. No consultation was required to effect this change, even though the speed limit was effectively 'doubled on this stretch of road from 30mph to 60mph', as the change was required to address the anomaly on what is currently a 'unadopted' road, albeit that the adoption Agreement with TW enables a speed limit to be applied to this road.

The distance from the current last column, which now has the 30/National Speed Limit signs affixed to it, to the 'gateway' feature is approximately 132 metres. There is also a 'badger' warning sign positioned around 75 metres from the current last column.

Considerations and agreed action;

An initial discussion concerning the issue took place between Taylor Wimpey (TW) and the Council (BC), where it was agreed to seek the views of TVP and the BC Road Safety Team - who have a significant input into the assessment of proposed speed limit changes in the County - which resulted in the following:

Notwithstanding the 30mph limit that is in place along the residential section of Westfield Road, national speed limit guidance suggests that; having no 'frontage development' (that has direct access on to Westfield Road), the limit that should be applied is 40mph, which would then allow the side roads to be signed as 30mph.

However, in the prevailing circumstances, it was agreed that the existing 30mph limit should remain in place, with the following amendment being applied to the signage at the southern end of the entrance to the village and the BC Street Lighting team, provided the following as a guide as to how the issue could be taken forward; "Current guidance suggests that a road should be lit, 5 seconds of travelling time before a 'hazard' is encountered.

And that the distance travelled in 5 seconds at 30mph is 67m, with the maximum permitted column spacing in these conditions being 37m with a standard maintenance LED lantern".

Therefore, from this (taking the Warwick Road junction as being the hazard), it was decided that the recommended course of action was that 2 new columns, at 35 metre spacing, should be installed, so enabling the start of the 30mph limit to be moved a distance of 70m from the current last existing column, giving an overall distance of approximately 80 to 85 metres from the start of the repositioned 30mph limit to the centreline of the Warwick Road junction.

This outcome has been discussed and agreed between BC and TVP and now all possible avenues are being explored that will allow the necessary works to take place in the earliest possible timescale.

A final point to note and in lieu of the decisions/ impending action being taken, is that the Parish Council (along with a number of residents) made a request for the currently relocated 30mph signs to either be removed or put back to their original position, until the above could be enacted, to which the answer given was 'no', because, as a result of comments made by TVP, whilst the development remained unadopted, the roads and footways forming the estate were open to use by the travelling public and therefore, the signs provided must comply with all legislative requirements.

We hope this information is useful and helps to provide an understanding of the situation and intended course of action.

Regards

**Highways Development Management
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