

Questions submitted prior to the 23rd February:

Question 1

How has the proposal been assessed when a clear sight line cannot be made due to the Village white gates being in place along with a large backing board?



Due to the long, straight approach, there are not considered to be any issues with forward visibility of the signs either in their current or proposed locations.

The Pitstone Village nameplate will be retained on the existing gateway feature. The relocated terminal signage of the larger 750mm signs with yellow backing boards, will be on a single post on one side of the road and fixed to a lamp column on the other, at the new location. There is good inter-visibility to and from Warwick Road which is unlikely to be affected by the relocated signs, however this will be checked prior to installation.

Question 2

The higher the prevailing traffic speeds, the greater this distance needs to be and what consideration have been given to this?

Current guidance suggests that where street lighting is present a road should be lit, 5 for 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, taking the Warwick Road junction as being the hazard, 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.

Question 3

With regard to the speed limit signs; bringing the start of the 30mph limit to within metres of the Warwick Road junction - a residential road with residential dwellings within metres of the main Westfield Road. Why has this been done, and under what legal position?

The previous position of the signs was unlawful and could not be enforced, regardless of whether the road is public or private. The change was required in order for the speed limit to comply with the requirements of the Department for Transport (DfT) Speed Limit Regulations as part of the process to allow adoption of the estate to take place. Before the Council, as Highway Authority, can adopt the road and assume responsibility, it has a duty to ensure the signage is correct, legal and enforceable.

Question 4

How can the reduction in sized be considered safe when the whole point of the sign size is for speed reduction? - The new 30mph speed sign that has been replaced by TW and is considerably smaller than the 30 mph sign that was on the village boundary sign by 27%. All other village boundary signs in Bucks have a much larger sign than the current proposal

The current signs will be replaced with signs matching those previously erected at the village gates. That is 750mm dia. with yellow backing boards.

Question 5

Has the proposal been considered in line with the Environmental impact and sustainability by Bucks Council? As well as an increase in ongoing lighting repair costs to be covered by the council taxes?

LED lamps are to be installed on the proposed columns, which have a much smaller impact on the environment and a commuted sum is payable by the developer towards future maintenance and energy costs.

Questions 6

Why has the proposal of enforcing a TRO to keep the speed signs where they have been in place for 19 years not been reviewed? (as they are well known by all road users who use this road)

Why has a section of Westfield Road had the speed limit DOUBLED from 30 to 60mph? Why have the signs moved after being on the gates for 20 years?

Why is a TRO not a discussion point?

How is it that other local villages have signs that are not installed on street lamps?

This road was first installed as a new road across the undeveloped land. The gateway and speed limit were installed at the start of the development prior to many of the residential properties being built, possibly at a time when the extent of buildings was to be finalised. Now the property locations are known the speed limit has to be assessed following DfT guidelines as part of the road adoption process. The adoption of Westfield Road is due to take place in approximately 6 months, once the agreed maintenance period has concluded.

The previous speed limit did not comply with regulations as there was no Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to support it and was beyond the existing street lighting system, which would automatically impose a 30mph limit. The introduction of a TRO was discussed but not supported at the site meeting attended by TVP and Road Safety because it didn't meet the relevant guidance.

Any speed limit should be self-explaining, in that drivers see a reason to slow down, if it is too far from a hazard, junction or village environment there is a greater likelihood of non-compliance. The proposed relocation of the limit complies with DfT guidance and may have the advantage of increasing compliance by drivers entering and exiting the village.

The proposed changes will provide an enforceable speed limit at a location that is DfT compliant and supported by TVP/BC.

Question 7 - 8

All proposed assemblies should be critically examined and made public and why was both the Pitstone Parish Council and Castlemead/Pitstone residents not made aware of this beforehand?

Whilst what was the existing 30mph signage, does not have street lights up to the start of it, the distance between the 30mph and first street lamp can be no more than 200m. Surely a simple solution, if the issue of lack of street lights, despite signage, is the issue, would be to install three streetlights?

There is no requirement to formally consult when remedial works are undertaken to address an anomaly to bring signage into compliance with Regulations. It has been recognised that the relocated signs have caused concern amongst the Parish Council and local residents and, as a result, this has been reviewed and the compromise action of signs being placed part way between the original and current positions has been agreed. This is to be achieved by extending the existing street lighting system by the addition of two new lighting columns in accordance with the details covered in the answer to question 2. The proposed changes will provide an enforceable speed limit at a location that is supported by TVP/BC.

Question 9

Village boundaries I.E.: White gates combined with speed signs are shown by government research to reduce traffic speed on average of 5 miles per hour Has your proposal taken this into consideration to be enforced with a TRO

Retaining the gateway feature at its current location with the village nameplates, gives advance notice to North West bound drivers they are entering a village environment from the rural section. The straight road geometry allows drivers to see well ahead the requirement to slow to 30 mph at the end of 'dragons teeth' markings and reinforced by a 30 mph carriageway roundel. Drivers leaving the village are also more likely to comply with the limit to a point where it seems reasonable, before increasing their speed, prior to the national speed limit and gateway.

Questions 10 - 13

Can you confirm what feasibility study has taken place to support your proposal?
EG; speed of traffic using this road, along with number of vehicles (including HGV's)

What were the Health and Safety issues considered in the risk assessment which preceded the recent decision to change the position of the 30 mph signs?

What speed monitoring has been done on this section of road?

What traffic survey has taken place prior to this decision being made? i.e speed, volume of traffic, accidents, and what were the results. The road has changed drastically in 20 years

The previous positioning of the signs was unlawful and could not be enforced. The change was required in order for the speed limit to comply with the requirements of the DfT Speed Limit Regulations. As such, there was no requirement to undertake a feasibility study. BC have not undertaken any speed surveys but, the relocated speed limit is likely to improve current driver compliance with the 30 mph speed limit and has been assessed in line with any other new speed limit within Buckinghamshire by TVP, a BC Network Safety Team speed limit assessor, and road safety auditor.

Question 14

Has the alignment of Westfield Road been considered, trending approximately W-E, with rising sun in the mornings, directly in the eyes of people turning right out of Warwick Road?

The DfT guidance does not specifically consider environmental factors such as position of the sun within in its guidance documents.

Question 15

Taking into account my observations, and the speeds recorded on the parish council MVAS, could we have traffic calming measures installed on Westfield Road prior to the junction with Warwick Road?

Traffic calming proposals may be considered by the Community Board once the roads have been adopted, although it should be noted that there was no funding requirement for this covered by the Section 106 Agreement.

Question 16

Has consideration been given to cars that leave their drive from within Warwick Road area with cold engines and having to accelerate up to maximum speed leaving a 30 mph limit. This is detrimental to environment and also a serious safety issue. *Please advise of local residential streets that turn from a 30 immediately into a 60mph restriction.*

Vehicles pulling out of Warwick Road are travelling from a 30mph road into a 30mph road. There is enough visibility from Warwick Road to Westfield Road for drivers to safely exit the junction. As set out above, the signs are to be relocated part way between the original and current positions by extending the existing street lighting system by the addition of two new lighting columns. This will extend the 30mph speed limit by a further 70 metres from their current location. Consequently, we are of the view that the change will not result in a detrimental impact on the safety of drivers entering or exiting Warwick Road.

Question 17

Why is cost the overriding factor when nearly £1million has recently been spent on a football pavillion. This in the greater scheme of things is minimal, but potentially lifesaving/changing

This is not a matter of costs, the previous position of the signs was unlawful and could not be enforced. The change was required in order for the speed limit to comply with the requirements of the DfT Speed Limit Regulations.

Questions raised during the meeting, including those submitted by Mr Phillips and Pitstone Parish Council after the meeting:**Question 1**

If this was a regular road with no pavement or cycle path, perhaps this compromise of moving the speed limit would be seem more reasonable. However, so many families with children use this pathway/cycle path and many children wait for buses along this road, so this adds to the danger. Is this not taken into consideration for safety or are there standard laws/rules for all roads?

The pedestrian/cycleway is present for the entire length of Westfield Road, in areas adjacent to lengths of road covered by both 30mph and national speed limit. The revised location for the signs has been agreed as complying with Regulations and this is unlikely to have an effect on pedestrian safety.

The formal bus stops on Westfield Road are located well within the 30mph speed limit to the north of Quarry Road and to the north of Corfe Road.

Question 2

The speed is still enforceable where they currently are placed. It is an un adopted road and not a Private Road.

Agreed that the signs in their current location are now enforceable and that the road is currently unadopted but will be adopted later this year. The signs in their previous location were not enforceable, as set out above.

Question 3

What contractual obligations did the builder have to make the road fit for purpose from the onset – Why wait so long?

As set out above, before the Council, as Highway Authority, can adopt the road and assume responsibility, it has a duty to ensure the signage is correct, legal and enforceable. It is not uncommon for remedial works to be required in order to bring a road up to an adoptable standard and the Council is under no obligation to adopt the road until such time as all necessary works have been completed. The onus is on the developer to ensure that all works are undertaken to the Council's standard and satisfaction, which often results in delays in progressing matters, as has been the case here.

Question 4

You can add street lamps up to 183m apart
Can you paint the whites gates?

Yes you can have street lights placed at 183 metres apart but, due to the spread of light from the lamps, this would leave large areas of the road unlit. 183m is the maximum permitted distance that would constitute a system of street lighting to support a 30mph speed limit.

Current guidance suggests that where street lighting is present a road should be lit, for 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, taking the Warwick Road junction as being the hazard, 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.

We will approach TW to see if they would be willing to repaint the gates as part of the ongoing remedial works.

Question 5

Which officer or dept would be responsible for appearing at Her Majesty's coroners court to explain the decision making process in the event of a fatality that is caused by doubling the speed limit...especially considering the risks to children getting off the school bus and crossing a road with near motorway speed. This question was submitted

As stated in previous FAQs (prior to meeting) we are implementing an enforceable 30mph speed limit, not doubling an existing speed limit. The bus stop will be within that 30 mph speed limit. Road Traffic Collisions are rare, random, multi-factor events with many contributory factors. If a fatal collision occurs, it will be investigated by experts from TVP Roads Policing. **If** there is a highway factor involved (95% of collisions involve an element of driver behaviour) BC / TfB will be advised and, depending on the factors, a suitable officer will be identified to attend.

Question 6

The stopping distance for a car travelling at 60mph is 63m - you propose to move the 60/30 barrier 70m away from a junction. Can you consider the stopping distance for a fully laden HGV?

The speed limit change will be approximately 80m away from the Warwick Road junction. The forward visibility of the signs and the addition of the new street lighting columns and forward visibility of the signs and the addition of the new street lighting columns and road markings will help to highlight the start of the 30mph limit and give drivers the opportunity to slow down in advance of the start of the speed limit terminal point.

The Highway Code at rule 154 states:

Take extra care on country roads and reduce your speed at approaches to bends, which can be sharper than they appear, and at junctions and turnings, which may be partially hidden. Be prepared for pedestrians, horse riders, cyclists, slow-moving farm vehicles or mud on the road surface. Make sure you can stop within the distance you can see to be clear. You should also reduce your speed where country roads enter villages.

It should also be noted that on single carriageway roads, the maximum legal speed limit for an HGV over 7.5 tonnes is 50mph.

Question 7

Will there be a lessons learned report published

Speed surveys will be undertaken by TfB once the road has been adopted and the new speed limit is in situ, along with its supporting infrastructure, dragons teeth etc. Results will then be fed back via a future meeting of the Community Board.

Question 8

Can we see a proper visual plan of what the proposals will look like rather than a mock up done on a powerpoint done in 10 secs !

It is not intended to provide any more detail beyond that that has already been provided. Details will form part of the 'Final as Built' drawings required by the Council prior to the adoption of the road.

Question 9

In respect of the proposed solution, will you comment on my two key concerns:

- That the proposed 'solution' to relocate the terminal barrier boundary 80m south of the Warwick Road junction (50m north of the white gated traffic calming measure) concerns me the stopping distance for a car travelling at 60mph is 73m. Has the council considered the stopping distance of laden HGV traveling at 56mph...and considered the number of HGVs that visit Pitstone Green?
- Also, regulations state that a terminal sign that reduces a 60 mph road on a 30 mph single carriageway road must be in full sight and visible from a distance of 115m. Won't the sign then be obscured by the white gate?

The first part of question regarding stopping sight distance has been addressed above. The speed limit has been assessed in accordance with DfT guidance for setting speed limits by our Road Safety Team and TVP. The long straight approach to the gates and then to the relocated signs beyond, means that sufficient visibility of the signs will be available.

Question 10

Are you intending to ignore the safety concerns that have been expressed by over 400 people?

Safety concerns have been taken into account in the assessment and have resulted in the compromise scheme tabled. The Council arranged for a public meeting to be held and has provided a number of responses to individual residents, members and the Parish Council. It is noted that a petition has been submitted and this will be responded to in accordance with the Council's constitution.

Question 11

How can DOUBLING a speed limit inside of white gate traffic calming measure ever be justified?

As set out above, the location of the 30mph speed signs did not comply with regulations as there was no Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to support it and it was beyond the existing street lighting system, which would automatically impose a 30mph limit. As a result there was no legal speed limit in place.

Any speed limit should be self-explaining, in that drivers see a reason to slow down, if it is too far from a hazard, junction or village environment there is a greater likelihood of non-compliance. The proposed relocation of the limit complies with DfT guidance and may have the advantage of increasing compliance by drivers entering and exiting the village.

The proposed changes will provide a legal and enforceable speed limit.

Question 12

Is unusual for a Council to insist that a speed limit is DOUBLED on a section of road and for a civilian Traffic Officer representing TVP to both approve the change - seemingly without conducting an adequate risk assessment - and also to show resistance / a lack of consideration for a safer alternative. It also seems very ironic for me to be communicating my concerns to people whom are tasked with considering the needs of the community and to leading the responsibility of ensuring road safety; I appeal to all concerned, Taylor Wimpey, Bucks Council, TFB, Pitstone Parish Council, the Dept For Transport and Thames Valley Police to simply hear the concerns of many residents and of those whom have signed the petition. Do you acknowledge that public safety must be a priority.

Please see response to the above question. All requests for new speed limits across the Council area are assessed by the Road Safety Team in consultation with TVP and are considered against DfT guidance. The Council are very much concerned with road safety and the setting up of appropriate speed limits that are legally enforceable is one of those priorities.

Question 13

When will Bucks Council start the application for a TRO?

As explained above, the provision of the additional street lighting does not require a TRO.

Question 14

Has the council consulted with the DFT?

There is no requirement for the Council to consult with the DfT.

Question 15

Can Bucks Council give reassurance to the residents of Castlemead that you don't have any more surprises in hand, in respect of further changes to the local infrastructure that will put people at risk?

We cannot guarantee that further changes to the local infrastructure will not occur in the future. Nevertheless, we will endeavour to communicate any changes through appropriate channels such as local members, parish councils and community boards.

Question 16

Will the council take responsibility if there is a death or injury caused by a vehicle travelling at excessive speed in the new 60mph zone?

Please see the answer to question 5 above.

Question 17

Can you please make sure that the document you are issuing that answers all the questions raised, includes a clear definition of why it is not legally possible to put street lights all the way out to the gate. We could not explain this well enough to satisfy the residents. If it is not a legal issue, please advise what other issues stop this happening.

The Council follow DfT guidance as policy when setting speed limits. This can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-local-speed-limits/setting-local-speed-limits>

Whilst adhering to the DfT guidance and following a site visit by the TVP Traffic Management Officer and the Council's Speed Limit Review Officer the most appropriate location for the speed limit terminal signs was identified. This does not coincide with the position of the village name plate. A 30 mph speed limit can be made by a Traffic Regulation Order which involves a public consultation or by the presence of a system of street lighting. To enable the new speed limit location to be legal and thereby enforceable it was decided that the most efficient method of achieving this was to install 2 additional street lighting columns.

Question 18

We are still being urged to move our mVAS to this location. If we purchase a lamp post fixing kit (we currently use a ground screw fixing kit) would BC be willing to come out to site to look and see if we have any suitable lamp post locations that it could be located in (even if only temporarily) and either grant permission for this additional location, or turn-a-blind-eye to it being in this location for a short time, without charging us the normal fee to assess and approve a location? And might our normal need to get TW to approve the location as well (as it is still their lamp post until handed over) be waived in the short term.

As the device is to be mounted on a street lighting column owned by Taylor Wimpey, then this can be done with their agreement (BC will advise TW that this is acceptable). A site visit and approval by TfB will not therefore be required. The device however, should be mounted in such a position that it only detects vehicles once they have entered the 30 mph speed limit section.