

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Economy, Transport, and Environment
Date:	7 October 2013
Title:	Whitchurch Residential 20 MPH Pilot
Reference:	5183
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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1. Executive Summary

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to consider whether Lynch Hill Park/Dances Lane should be included within the proposal to be formally advertised for the Whitchurch Residential 20mph pilot scheme as requested by residents via a petition.

2. Contextual information

2.1. Whitchurch has been identified as one of the nine pilot areas to introduce a 20mph speed limit under the Residential 20 Pilot Programme. The former Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment instructed officers to agree the extents of the proposed 20 mph limits with the local Member concerned. The initial area agreed is shown on the attached plan and included Lynch Hill Park/Dances Lane.

2.2. An extensive informal consultation was undertaken with all residents included in the pilot area to assess whether a 20mph speed limit would be supported by the local community.

2.3. Following the consultation, the former Executive Member requested officers to discuss the outcome of the consultation with the appropriate local Member.

2.4. Generally there was support from the local community, but there was some concern as to the suitability of some of the roads, which included Lynch Hill Park. Further speed surveys were undertaken to assess whether this road would be recommended to remain within the pilot area.

2.5. Speed surveys were undertaken and officers reported back to the local Member. The results showed that traffic behaviour is suited to a 30mph speed limit and the majority of motorists were complying with the current speed limit

(mean average speed just below 30mph). Based on these results a lower speed limit would not usually be promoted at this location. Traffic flow is also light with 1158 vehicles using the road in an average day. The highest peak hour was in the morning with an average of 152 vehicles using the road during the peak (approximately five vehicles every two minutes). It was therefore concluded at that time that the character of the road was better suited to a 30mph speed limit rather than a 20mph speed limit. To exclude this road, however, may encourage more traffic to divert into it when the 20mph scheme is implemented on nearby routes. The consultation exercise indicated general support by residents for a lower speed limit.

- 2.6. After careful review of the finely balanced considerations, it was agreed with the local Member that Lynch Hill Park/Dances Lane should be omitted from the scheme to be formally advertised.
- 2.7. The residents of the roads where amendments had been made were sent a letter informing them of the changes. These letters were distributed to the 78 properties in Lynch Hill Park.
- 2.8. A letter, dated 30 June 2013, in the form of a petition with 38 signatories was received in response. The petition urged Hampshire County Council to include Lynch Hill Park within the proposed pilot area.
- 2.9. Before any speed limit can be introduced it needs to be legally advertised for a period of 21 days as part of the traffic order process, inviting any objections or comments. The 20mph speed limit for the Whitchurch area is due to be formally advertised in the near future. Given the strength of feeling displayed by the local residents it is felt prudent to reinstate Lynch Hill Park and Dances Lane into the pilot area prior to the formal advertisement. The petition has shown that significant objection is likely if these roads are excluded. It would not be possible to reinstate these roads following formal advertisement if the objection were to be upheld as this would be classed as a substantial change to the advertised Traffic Order which would result in the need for re-advertisement which would result in added costs and additional officer time. Removal of roads following advertisement, as a result of objections, does not usually require re-advertisement as it is a reduction to the advertised Order (unless it is also deemed to be a substantial change). In general, it is easier to reduce a proposal following formal advert than it is to increase the proposal.

3. Local Member View

- 3.1. Councillor Thacker, the local Member, is of the view that Lynch Hill Park has been reviewed thoroughly and does not lend itself to the 20 mph pilot. He feels that the speed surveys support this view. He states that as it has sharp bends at either end, vehicles will not be entering it at speed. However, the road is wide and straight, with pavements on both sides and the houses, for the most part, are set well back from the road. He suggests that the limit be advertised without Lynch Hill Park included and that the County Council

should consider further traffic surveys in the road once the pilot is in place and bedded in. This will provide an opportunity to assess what effect (if any) the scheme has had on traffic flows and speeds in Lynch Hill Park. He feels that the County Council would then be in a position to review whether or not to include that road at a later date, or to introduce other traffic management measures.

- 3.2. The character and current use of Lynch Hill Park do not support a 20mph speed limit and on this basis, the County Council would not normally consider Lynch Hill Park for a 20mph speed limit. However the road does form a natural bypass for traffic travelling between the north (A34 / Newbury Road) and the east (B3400 / London Road) to avoid the town centre. The town centre is historic, narrow and has many junctions which would be difficult for large vehicles. It is logical to expect some through traffic to use Lynch Hill Park. Residents have expressed concern at the possibility that by not including Lynch Hill Park in the Whitchurch pilot 20mph speed limit, this problem will be increased as through traffic seeks to avoid the 20mph speed limit area when travelling through the town. Given the strength of local support for the 20mph speed limit, it is now considered preferable to include Lynch Hill Park in the advertised Traffic Order.

4. Finance

- 4.1. There is no financial implication related to this decision.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1. That Lynch Hill Park/Dances Lane be included in the 20mph speed limit proposals for the Whitchurch Residential 20mph pilot scheme when they are formally advertised as part of the Traffic Order process.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

1.1. The proposals in this report have been developed with due regard to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Council's equality objectives. The website contains a summary [assessment of the impacts](#) in this service area, 1.4 Developing Hampshire's Highways Network and Transport System.

1.2 It is considered that the issues covered by this report will not have impacts requiring further specific actions by the Council above those already established in its existing policies and working procedures.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. The proposal will have no direct impact on the Crime and Disorder Act but should contribute towards a safer and more secure community.

3. Climate Change:

3.1. How what does is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

Lower more constant speeds will help reduce energy consumptions and help reduce the carbon footprint.

3.2. How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

There are no direct impacts on climate change adaptations from amending speed limits in Hampshire