

SPEED LIMIT REVIEW

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Secretary of State for Transport announced a review of speed limits on all 'A' and 'B' roads on 15 December 2005 with any changes to the speed limits being implemented by 2011.
- 1.2 The announcement means that all local authorities have to review the speed limits on all 'A' and 'B' roads in accordance with guidance published on 8 August 2006; DfT Circular 01/2006 – Setting Local Speed Limits.
- 1.3 The Executive approved a Speed Management Strategy on 10th April 2006. This Strategy noted that speed limits are important in the Speed Management Toolkit, though it must be remembered that lowering speed limits does not necessarily lead to reduced speeds. There is a need to introduce appropriate speed limits in a consistent way. Care needs to be taken to ensure that limits are not totally inappropriate or unjustified resulting in mass abuse, bringing them and the overall Speed Management Strategy into disrepute. Key factors in deciding the appropriate speed limit for roads will be the mix, volume and speed of traffic, the use of the road by vulnerable road users, the frontage/land use and the accident record.

2.0 THE REVIEW

- 2.1 In line with the Government's requirements and guidance all 'A' and 'B' classified roads in Luton and any other roads where the present speed limit is in excess of 30mph have been included in this review. The current speed limits are shown on drawing at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 The review consisted of an initial consultation with the emergency services and others at a Traffic Liaison Meeting and also an analysis of recorded personal injury accidents shown on drawing at Appendix 2.
- 2.3 DfT Circular 01/2006 – Setting Local Speed Limits, acknowledges that whilst 30mph is the standard speed limit for urban areas, a 40mph limit may be used where appropriate and, in exceptional circumstances, a 50 mph limit may be considered. The Circular states for urban areas:

<i>Speed limit (mph)</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>
<i>20mph</i>	<i>In town centres, residential areas and in the vicinity of schools where there is a high presence of vulnerable road users.</i>
<i>30mph</i>	<i>The standard limit in built-up areas with development on both sides of the road.</i>

40mph	<p><i>Higher quality suburban roads or those on the outskirts of urban area where there is little development. Should be few vulnerable road users.</i></p> <p><i>Should have good width and layout, parking and waiting restrictions in operation, and buildings set back from the road.</i></p> <p><i>Should wherever possible cater for the needs of non-motorised users through segregation of road space, and have adequate footways and crossing places.</i></p>
50mph	<p><i>Usually most suited to special roads, dual carriageway ring or radial routes or bypasses which have become partially built up.</i></p> <p><i>Should be little or no roadside development</i></p>

3.0 A1081

- 3.1. The A1081 is known as Airport Way and lies between Junction 10A of the M1 and Gypsy Lane. It is a dual carriageway for about a 1km and then becomes a single carriageway road. There is no development and few junctions.
- 3.2. The permanent speed limit is the national speed limit however; due to the construction of the East Luton Corridor it currently has a 40mph temporary speed limit to Capability Green and then 30mph temporary speed limit to Kimpton Road.
- 3.3. The annual average daily flow is in the region of 29,000 vehicles.
- 3.4. In the last five years (2002 to 2006) there has been 1 serious and 24 slight accidents.
- 3.5. The accident rate for the dual carriageway section is 23 accidents per 100,000 vehicles.
- 3.6. It is proposed to reduce the dual carriageway to a 50mph speed limit as it is felt that the national speed limit of 70mph is inappropriate for a main approach road to Luton and the airport. This was agreed by the Inspector at the East Luton Corridor Public Enquiry.
- 3.7. See the A505 section for proposals for the single carriageway section.

4.0 A505

- 4.1. The A505 runs between Hitchin and Dunstable and is made up of Hitchin Road, Vauxhall Way, Airport Way, Gypsy Lane, Windmill Road, Park Viaduct, Chapel Viaduct, Stuart Street and Dunstable Road.
- 4.2. Windmill Road, Park Viaduct, Chapel Viaduct, Stuart Street and Dunstable Road to Chaul End Lane are currently 30mph speed limits and it is felt that this is appropriate. Although the route from Park Viaduct to Dunstable Road's junction of Telford Way is a dual carriageway the fact that it has a poor accident record and has numerous junctions this speed limit is felt to be appropriate.
- 4.3. The following paragraphs go through each section in turn.

Hitchin Road

- 4.4. Hitchin Road lies between Ashcroft Road and the borough boundary and is a dual carriageway with a 40mph speed limit. There are limited accesses with the majority of the properties set back. The park and cemetery are severed from the main population by the road.
- 4.5. The annual average daily flow is in the region of 23,000 vehicles.
- 4.6. In the last five years (2002 to 2006) there have been 3 serious and 20 slight accidents. This gives 9.6 accidents per km. The accident rate is 18.8 accidents per 100,000 vehicle kilometres.
- 4.7. Although the accident record is not good the accidents are not related to speed.
- 4.8. It is felt that 40mph is appropriate because of the nature of the road (dual carriageway) and limited frontages, therefore it is not proposed to change the existing 40mph speed limit.

Stopsley Way

- 4.9. Stopsley Way lies between Hitchin Road and Ashcroft Road and is a dual carriageway with a 40mph speed limit. There is no development with few junctions. Stopsley Fire Station has access onto it.
- 4.10. The annual average daily flow is in the region of 36,000 vehicles.
- 4.11. In the last five years (2002 to 2006) there have been 3 serious and 29 slight accidents. This gives 38.9 accidents per km. The accident rate is 58.9 accidents per 100,000 vehicle kilometres.
- 4.12. Although the accident record is poor the accidents are not related to speed.

4.13. It is felt that 40mph is appropriate because of the nature of the road (dual carriageway) and limited frontages, therefore it is not proposed to change the existing 40mph speed limit.

Vauxhall Way

4.14. Vauxhall Way lies between Kimpton Road and Hitchin Road. It is a single carriageway road with a 40mph speed limit. There is little development and all road junctions access the road via roundabouts.

4.15. In the last five years (2002 to 2006) there have been 1 serious and 26 slight accidents. This gives 9.8 accidents per km and an accident rate of 23.7 accidents per 100,000 vehicle kilometres.

4.16. It is felt that 40mph is appropriate for this single carriageway road with no development however, there is a cycle lane proposed between Eaton Green Road and Kimpton Road and this may mean that the speed limit should be reduced to 30mph to protect the cyclists.

Airport Way

4.17. Airport Way lies between Gypsy Lane and Kimpton Road. It is a single carriageway road with no development or junctions.

4.18. The permanent speed limit is national speed limit however; due to the construction of the East Luton Corridor it currently has a 30mph temporary speed limit.

4.19. The annual average daily flow is in the region of 18,000 vehicles.

4.20. In the last five years (2002 to 2006) there have been 7 slight injury accidents.

4.21. The accident rate is 37.4 accidents per 100,000 vehicle kilometres for the single carriageway section of Airport Way.

4.22. The current national speed limit of 60mph is considered inappropriate. It is proposed to reduce the speed limit from 150 m from Park Road to Kimpton Road to a 40mph speed limit. This was agreed by the Inspector at the East Luton Corridor Public Enquiry.

4.23. When the construction of the East Luton Corridor is completed this will be a dual carriageway and be subject to a 40mph speed limit.

Gypsy Lane

4.24. Gypsy Lane lies between Airport Way and Windmill Road. It is a single carriageway road with some development in the form of retail and leisure parks.

- 4.25. The permanent speed limit is 40mph however, due to the construction of the East Luton Corridor it currently has a 30mph temporary speed limit.
- 4.26. In the last five years (2002 to 2006) there have been 5 slight injury accidents.
- 4.27. The Traffic Liaison group felt that the current temporary speed limit of 30mph should remain in place and therefore this is proposed.

Dunstable Road

- 4.28. Dunstable Road is a dual carriageway road which lies between Chaul End Lane and Skimpot Road with a 40mph speed limit. It is residential with private accesses onto the road.
- 4.29. The catchment areas for Challney High Schools for girls and boys are severed by the road but there are pedestrian crossing facilities.
- 4.30. The annual average daily flow is in the region of 33,500 vehicles.
- 4.31. In the last five years (2002 to 2006) there have been 1 fatal, 13 serious and 83 slight accidents. This gives 49 accidents per km and an accident rate of 81.2 accidents per 100,000 vehicle kilometres.
- 4.32. There is a very poor accident record however, it was initially felt that as this was a dual carriageway (unlike Luton Road, Dunstable which is a single carriageway road with drivers being allowed to turn right into junctions and private accesses) it should remain 40mph.

5.0 A5065

- 5.1. The A5065 Hatters Way is a single carriageway road which lies between Dunstable Road and the borough boundary at the M1 motorway. There is no development and limited number of junctions access the road via roundabouts.
- 5.2. The speed limit was changed in 2006 to 40mph from 50mph between Dunstable Road and Chaul End Lane and the national speed limit between Chaul End Lane and the borough boundary.
- 5.3. The annual average daily flow is in the region of 26,000 vehicles.
- 5.4. In the last five years (2002 to 2006) there have been 1 fatal, 4 serious and 43 slight accidents. There were 16.3 accidents per km and an accident rate of 34.2 accidents per 100,000 vehicle kilometres.
- 5.5. However, analysis of the accidents in the first year following implementation of the local safety scheme and reduction of the speed limit showed that the severity of the accidents had fallen.

5.6. As the severity rating reduced following the change in the speed limit last year it is proposed to keep the speed limit as 40mph.

6.0 A6

6.1. The A6 runs between the Town Centre and the borough boundary at the Pasque Hospice and is made up of New Bedford Road and Barton Road.

6.2. There is a 30mph speed limit between the Town Centre and north of Stockingstone Road. The rest of the A6 is 40mph.

6.3. From north of Stockingstone Road the character of the road changes from residents with properties close to the carriageway to residential but properties are set back.

6.4. Icknield High School and Barnfield College are adjacent to the A6 and Cardinal Newman High School is just off the A6 on Warden Hill Road.

6.5. The annual average daily flow is in the region of 25,000 vehicles.

6.6. There has been 5 serious and 61 slight injury accidents in the last five years.

6.7. This gives 24 accidents per km and an accident rate of 54.9 accidents per 100,000 vehicle kilometres between Stockingstone Road and Riddy Lane.

6.8. Frequent requests are received to reduce the speed limit near Graham Gardens due to the difficulties residents experience turning right out of Graham Gardens due to the speed and flow on the A6.

6.9. Therefore it is proposed to reduce the speed limit here to 30mph.

6.10. The section from Riddy Lane to the borough boundary has fewer accidents with 18.9 accidents per km and an accident rate of 41.4 accidents per 100,000 vehicle kilometres and the properties are set back from the road and therefore, it is proposed to maintain the existing 40mph speed limit.

7.0 OTHER ROADS

Eaton Green Road

7.1. A section of Eaton Green Road from the end of the built up area to the borough boundary has the national speed limit. This is a short length of rural road and has had no injury accidents in the last five years.

7.2. There have been no accidents and therefore, it is proposed to maintain the existing national speed limit.

Icknield Way

- 7.3. Icknield Way between Barton Road and Bramingham Road is a single carriageway road with development on one side of the road. The speed limit is 40mph.
- 7.4. The road severs the residential areas of Bramingham and Icknield. There are a number of pedestrian/cycle crossing points along this stretch and also Grasmere Nursery school.
- 7.5. The annual average daily flow is in the region of 20,600 vehicles.
- 7.6. There have been 17 slight injury accidents in the last five years.
- 7.7. There were 18.5 accidents per km and an accident rate of 49.2 accidents per 100,000 vehicle kilometres.
- 7.8. In light of the above is proposed to reduce the speed limit to 30mph.

Bramingham Road

- 7.9. Bramingham Road between Icknield Way and Marsh Road. This is a single carriageway road with little development between Icknield Way and Weltmore Avenue. This section has a 40mph speed limit. The road then becomes residential and the speed limit is 30mph to Marsh Road.
- 7.10. Between Icknield Way and Weltmore Avenue there have been 2 serious and 15 slight injury accidents in the last five years.
- 7.11. Bramingham Road severs the catchment areas for Lea Manor High School.
- 7.12. There were 13 accidents per km and an accident rate of 39.8 accidents per 100,000 vehicle kilometres.
- 7.13. In light of the above it is felt that reducing the speed limit to 30mph would be appropriate.

Newlands Road

- 7.14. Newlands Road is a rural road on the edge of Luton and runs between Farley Hill and the A1081 Harpenden Road. Between Farley Hill and just past the rugby club there is a 40mph speed limit and the rest of Newlands Road is the national speed limit. It should be noted that the section between M1 spur over-bridge and Harpenden Road is not in Luton.
- 7.15. There have been 3 serious and 20 slight injury accidents within the borough in the last five years.
- 7.16. There were 19.6 accidents per km.

7.17. This is a rural road with a number of bends and therefore, it was felt that the speed limit should be reduced and 40mph has been proposed.

8.0 CONSULTATION

8.1 Consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders a list of which is shown in Appendix 3, public and area committees between May and September 2007. The public consultation was carried out on line but paper copies were also available. Press releases, articles in LutonLine and on the Bedfordshire and Luton Motorcycle Forum's website Motorcycling Matters were used to advertise the consultation.

8.2 154 responses were received from the public consultation (101 on line and 53 on paper).

8.3 The consultation results are shown below

Road	Proposed speed limit	Public Consultation results	Key Stakeholders				Comments
			Police	Pensioner Association	Luton Wheeler	CTC	
Airport Way (A1081/A505) dual carriageway	50mph	53% agree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	
Airport Way single carriageway	40mph	52% agree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	
Vauxhall Way (A505) between Stopsley Way and Eaton Green Road	40mph	79% agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Should be 50mph
Vauxhall Way (A505) between Eaton Green Road and Airport Way	40mph	75% agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Should be 50mph
Stopsley Way (A505)	40mph	86% agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Road severs school catchment area should be 30mph, should be 50mph
Hitchin Road (A505)	40mph	85% agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	
Hatters Way (A5065)	40mph	65% agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	
Dunstable Road A505 from Chaul End	40mph	75% agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Road severs school catchment

Lane to borough boundary							area should be 30mph, Dunstable Road should be the same as Luton Road, Dunstable
Eaton Green Road by borough boundary	60mph	79% agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Agree	
New Bedford Road/Barton Road A6, north of Riddy Lane/Barnfield Avenue	40mph	84% agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Road severs school catchment area should be 30mph,
New Bedford Road (A6) south of Riddy Lane/Barnfield Avenue	30mph	64% disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	
Icknield Way between Barton Road to Bramingham Road	30mph	60% disagree	Disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree	
Bramingham Road	30mph	60% disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	
Gypsy Lane	30mph	64% disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	
Newlands Road	40mph	57% disagree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Should be 50mph

8.4 Other comments received were in relation to worries that congestion would be increased if speed limits were reduced however, congestion is caused by the fact that the road cannot accommodate the number of vehicles trying to use it and in actual fact reducing the speed of traffic increases the capacity that because of the reduced following distance.

8.5 People were also concerned about drivers using other roads as short cuts if their journey times are increased by reducing the speed limit. Reducing the speed limit by 10mph increases the journey times of a 5 mile journey by less than 2.5 minutes if it were travelled at a constant speed without slowing for junctions, bends, or other vehicles.

9.0 REVISED PROPOSALS

9.1 Following the consultation the proposals were re-examined and the following changes have been proposed.

9.2 The proposed speed limits are shown on the drawing in Appendix 4.

Dunstable Road

9.3 Since the initial review a further accident study has been undertaken on Dunstable Road between Chaul End Lane and Skimpot Road.

9.4 The West Area Committee and other members of the public feel that the route to Dunstable town centre should be all one speed limit.

9.5 Therefore it is proposed to introduce a 30mph speed limit on the dual carriageway. Additional speed restraint measures would be required such as speed cameras.

New Bedford Road

9.6 It is proposed to extend the 30mph to the north of Riddy Lane roundabout as this would reduce the speed limit on the roundabout and assist the pupils at Icknield High School and Barnfield College.

Newlands Road

9.7 As a result of the consultation it is proposed to change the speed limit to 50mph. The 10mph reduction in speed limit balances the concerns of the emergency services and the poor accident record with the results of the public consultation and the rural nature of this road.

10.0 CONCLUSION

The following table shows the conclusions of the speed limit review

Road	Comments	Existing Speed Limit	Proposed Speed Limit
M1 (the responsibility of the Highways Agency)		National Speed Limit	National Speed Limit
East Luton Corridor			40mph
Airport Way (A1081/A505)	Changes to be implemented as part of East Luton Corridor. Future improvement of Junction 10A may require lowering of the speed limit due to design constraints	National Speed Limit (though temporary presently in place)	50/40mph
Vauxhall Way (A505) between Stopsley Way and Eaton Green Road	Present speed limit felt to be appropriate	40mph	40mph
Vauxhall Way (A505)		40mph	40mph

between Eaton Green Road and Airport Way			
Stopsley Way (A505)	Poor accident record, though due to nature of road present speed limit felt to be appropriate	40 mph	40 mph
Hitchin Road (A505)	Poor accident record, though due to nature of road present speed limit felt to be appropriate	40mph	40 mph
Hatters Way (A5065)	Present speed limit felt to be appropriate	40mph	40 mph
Dunstable Road A505 from Chaul End Lane to borough boundary	Very poor accident record though given road layout on balance it is felt present speed limit felt to be appropriate	40mph	30mph
Eaton Green Road by borough boundary	Present speed limit felt to be appropriate	National Speed Limit	National Speed Limit
New Bedford Road/Barton Road A6, north of Riddy Lane/Barnfield Avenue	Poor accident record and nearby schools but on balance existing restriction felt to be appropriate	40 mph	40 mph
New Bedford Road (A6) just north of Riddy Lane/Barnfield Avenue	Poor accident record and residential/college fronting the road. Previous requests to reduce speed limit on this section of road	40mph	30mph
Icknield Way between Barton Road to Bramingham Road	Poor accident record and nursery school located on road	40 mph	30 mph
Bramingham Road	Poor accident record between Northwell Drive and Wauluds Bank Drive	40 mph	30 mph
Gypsy Lane	Retail and leisure uses along this road makes it suitable for 30mph controls. Present temporary 30mph restriction seems to work well and be appropriate.	40 mph (though presently temporary 30 mph)	30 mph
Newlands Road	Request from emergency services for speed limit to be reduced. Poor accident record between Luton Road and Church Road.	National Speed Limit	50 mph

Appendix 3 – Stakeholders consulted

Organisation	Responded
Age Concern	
Arriva The Shires and Essex	
Bedfordshire Police	yes
Bedfordshire and Luton Fire and Rescue	
British Motorcycle Federation	
Centrebus Ltd	
Cycle Touring Club	
Disabled Drivers' Association	
East of England Ambulance Service	
Freight Transport Association	
Icknield Road Club	
Luton and District Association for the Disabled	
Luton and District Driving School Association	
Luton Motorcycle Action group	
Luton Pensions Association	yes
Luton Senior People Forum	
CTC South Beds	yes
Luton Wheeler Cycling Club	yes
Road Haulage Association	
Sight Concern Bedfordshire	
South Beds Cycle Campaign	
Sovereign Bus and Coach Co Ltd	
Stagecoach United Counties	

Sustrans	
The Disability Resource Centre	
Three Star Buses	