

North Yorkshire Council

Environment Executive Members

19 December 2025

Proposed Introduction of a 20mph Speed Limit on Main Street and Water Lane, Kirk Smeaton.

Report of the Assistant Director – Highways & Infrastructure

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Corporate Director for Environment in consultation with the Executive Member for Highways and Transportation of the outcome of the public consultation and statutory advertisement which took place with regard to this proposal and ask for a decision to be made on whether or not the proposal to reduce the speed limit to 20mph on Main Street and Water Lane Kirk Smeaton, be introduced or set aside in light of the objection received.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Main Street and Water Lane are residential streets in a small rural village, forming part of the main link between Kirk Smeaton and Little Smeaton. Located on Main Street is the local C of E primary school. The speed limit is currently 30mph which is the norm in villages.
- 2.2 The proposal is in response to requests by the Parish Council and the Head of the local primary school, to reduce the speed limit to 20mph on Main Street and Water Lane, at the location shown on the attached plan Appendix A. Given the high level of pedestrian activity and the high volumes of vulnerable road users at school start and finish times, the reduction in the speed limit will ensure greater safety for pedestrians, in particular children. The Department for Transport's "Setting Local Speed Limits" guidance highlights the importance of traffic authorities' to keep their speed limits under review with changing circumstances; and consider the introduction of more 20mph speed limits and zones in built-up urban areas and village streets.
- 2.3 As part of the assessment of the proposed 20mph speed limit, one Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) survey was undertaken in order to ascertain whether a 20mph speed limit would be self-enforceable and complied with by drivers. The survey demonstrated that the existing mean speeds are commensurate with the proposed speed limit of 20mph as set out in the Department for Transport document - Circular Road 01/2013 Setting of Local Speed Limits. The survey results can be summarised as follows:

Location	Mean Speed	85%ile	Traffic Volume 7 days/both direction
Main Street	19.5mph	23.5mph	748

3.0 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 The proposal has been subject to consultation and public advertisement in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. The enabling Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was advertised for public comment in the local press, published on North Yorkshire Council's website and by means of a legal notice placed on the relevant street in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations.
- 3.2 The TRO was advertised for public comment on 21 August as follows: North Yorkshire Council (20mph Speed Limit) (Main Street, Water Lane, Kirk Smeaton) Order 2025. The last date for receipt of objections was 22 September 2025.
- 3.3 The process for the consideration of objections to Traffic Regulation Orders was approved by the Executive on 29 April 2014 and County Council on 21 May 2014. The consideration of objections to Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) is now a matter for the Executive and the role of the Area Committee is changed to a consultative role on 'wide area impact TROs'. The consideration of objections has been delegated by the Executive to the Corporate Director of Environment in consultation with the Executive Member for Highways and Transportation. The decision-making process relates to the provision and regulation of parking places both off and on the highway where an objection is received from any person or body entitled under the relevant statute. A 'wide area impact TRO' is classed as a proposal satisfying all the three criteria set out below.
- The proposal affects more than one street or road and.
 - The proposal affects more than one community and.
 - The proposal is located within the ward of more than one County Councillor.
- 3.4 Since the objection received only relates to an individual opposed to the reduction in the speed limit, contained within one street, one community and one Council Ward, this does not have a 'wide area impact TRO' and therefore the Area Committee's views have not been sought.

4.0 LOCAL MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1 Local Member Councillor John McCartney (the ward member representing Kirk Smeaton) was contacted during and after the consultation on his views to the proposals. Cllr McCartney is fully supportive of the proposals.
- 4.2 In accordance with the protocol for Environment Executive Member reports, the Local Elected Member will be provided with a copy of this report and be invited to the meeting on the 19 December 2025.

5.0 OFFICER COMMENTS

- 5.1 Officers have considered the objection received and have summarised the response along with officer comments in Appendix B.
- 5.2 With regard to the objection, it is suggesting that the proposals are a waste of money when the road is already safe as it is impossible to drive at 30mph. To introduce a 20mph speed limit it is a requirement that mean speeds are already low, to reduce the likelihood of requests to the police for enforcement action. National research and practice have shown that where the mean speed is at or below 24mph introducing signing alone is likely to lead to general compliance with the new speed limit. Officers consider that a lower speed limit will lower the number of collisions or injury severity and, reduce the likelihood further of injury collisions occurring.

- 5.3 There is clear evidence of the effect of reducing traffic speeds on the reduction of collisions and casualties, as collision frequency is less at lower speeds, and where collisions do occur, there is a reduced risk of fatal and serious injury. Research shows that on urban roads with low average traffic speeds any 1 mph reduction in average speed can reduce the collision frequency by around 6%, so driving at 20 mph compared to 30 mph is likely to reduce the frequency of collisions by 60%. This reduction in speeds and collisions particularly benefits children, where collisions can be reduced by up to two-thirds, and pedestrians who have a greater chance of survival in collisions at lower speeds.
- 5.4 Officers consider that the proposed measures set out in this report will assist in addressing the problems identified and thereby enable the Council to comply with its duty under Section 122(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to exercise its functions as road traffic authority so as to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising and preserves/ improves the amenities of the area through which the road runs, as set out in the Statement of Reasons for proposing to make the Order attached to this report in Appendix C. The proposed measures will also enable the Council to carry out its network management duty under Section 16 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 to secure the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network and both the more efficient use and the avoidance, elimination or reduction of road congestion or other disruption to the movement of traffic on their road network.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The cost of advertising the Traffic Regulation Order and installing the signs road markings, this would comprise of speed limit signing at the entry to the roads proposed to be subject to a 20mph speed limit, with repeater signs and 20mph roundel road markings at the required spacings throughout. The cost is estimated at approximately £2,500 which will be funded from the local highways (Signs Lines and TROs) Capital budget.

7.0 LEGAL

- 7.1 In the event that the Executive Member and Corporate Director for Environment resolve to follow the recommendations contained in this report, then in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, the Council will be required to make the relevant Traffic Regulation Order (with or without modifications) and publish a notice of making the Order in the local press before the Order comes into operation. The Council will also be required to notify the objectors of its decision and the reasons for making that decision within 14 days of the Order being made.
- 7.2 Where an Order has been made (i.e. sealed), if any person wishes to question the validity of the Order or any of its provisions on the grounds that it or they are not within the powers conferred by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, or that any requirement of the 1984 Act or of any instrument made under the 1984 Act has not been complied with, they may apply to the High Court within six weeks from the date on which the Order is made.
- 7.3 In recommending the implementation of the proposed TRO, officers consider that it will enable the Council to comply with its duties under Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Section 16 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. In light of the objection being received it has also been considered whether it would be appropriate to hold a public inquiry. As there is just a specific objection to be considered it would not be proportionate in terms of both time and costs to hold an Inquiry. The objection can be given proper regard in the report and decision making process.

8.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any equality impacts arising from the recommendation. It is the view of officers that the recommendation does not have an adverse impact on any of the protected characteristics identified in the Equalities Act 2010. A reduction in speed allows all people longer time in which to make decisions and crossroads. A screening form has been included in Appendix D

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

- 9.1 Consideration has also been given to the potential for any adverse Climate Change impacts arising from the recommendation. The proposal is to reduce the existing speed limit by the factor, 20mph. The effects of speed limits on vehicle emissions depend upon driver behaviour. However, emissions rural areas can generally be reduced if vehicles are driven at a lower speed, and drivers observe speed limits. The speed limit changes are unlikely to increase fluctuations in driver speeds or in pollution to any significant degree. It is therefore considered that there are no significant environmental implications arising from this report. A copy of the Climate Change Impact Assessment decision form is attached as Appendix E.

10.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Main Street and Water Lane, at the location shown on the attached plan Appendix A, has high level of pedestrian activity and the high volumes of vulnerable road users at school start and finish times, the reduction in the speed limit will ensure greater safety for pedestrians, in particular children. The Department for Transport's "Setting Local Speed Limits" guidance highlights the importance of traffic authorities' to keep their speed limits under review with changing circumstances; and consider the introduction of more 20mph speed limits and zones in built-up urban areas and village streets. This allows the Council to comply with its duty under Section 122(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to exercise their functions as road traffic authority so as to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising and preserves/ improves the amenities of the area through which the road runs, as set out in the Statement of Reasons, for proposing to make the Order.

11.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 11.1 It is recommended that the Corporate: -
- i. The results of the consultation exercise are noted.
 - ii. The Corporate Director, Environment, in consultation with the Environment Executive Member for Highways and Transportation, approves the introduction of a 20mph speed limit as advertised and as shown in the Plan contained in Appendix A.
 - iii. That the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) be authorised to seal the relevant Traffic Regulation Order by the Corporate Director, Environment and Environment Executive Member for access considering the objections received and that the objectors are notified within 14 days of the order being made

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Location plan.

Appendix B – Summary of the objections received, together with officer comment.

Appendix C – Statement of reasons.

Appendix D – Initial equality impact assessment screening form.

Appendix E - Climate change impact assessment.

Background Documents: Letter of objection received are held in the scheme file held by the Selby Area 7 Highways Office.

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