



**ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE – 6 June 2019**

**RESPONSE TO PETITION: REQUEST FOR THE SPEED REDUCTION
OF THE B581 STATION ROAD**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to advise on the outcome of investigations following the receipt of a petition requesting that the speed limit on the B581 between Elmesthorpe and Stoney Stanton be reduced.

Background

2. A fatal accident occurred on 7 January 2019 on Station Road, on a bend approximately 500m south east of the bridge over the M69. Leicestershire Police investigations into the incident are ongoing.
3. The petition, received by the County Council on 11 March 2019 contained 1457 signatures. The terms of the petition are:-

“We, the undersigned, are concerned residents who urge Leicestershire County Council to reduce the speed limit of the B581 in Elmesthorpe to 30mph and reduce the national speed limit section of the road to a Minimum of 30mph or a Maximum 40mph.”

4. The B581 Station Road runs between the junction of the A47 (Earl Shilton by pass) through Elmesthorpe, over the M69 motorway to the built up area of Stoney Stanton and the junction of New Road and Hinckley Road.
5. The current speed limit from the A47 junction through Elmesthorpe is 40 mph. This changes to the national speed limit (60 mph) just west of the bridge over the M69 and continues to the built up area of Stoney Stanton, where at a point just North West of the junction with Godfrey Close the 30 mph speed limit applicable in Stoney Stanton commences.

Data - Road Accidents and vehicle speed

Accidents

6. The petition states that since the year 2000, there has been a total of 51 recorded injury accidents on this stretch of the B581. This covers a two mile length of the B581 and equates to approximately three accidents annually. The most recent five year period shows a total of 12 recorded accidents. The rate therefore has reduced to 2.4 annually. See figure 1.

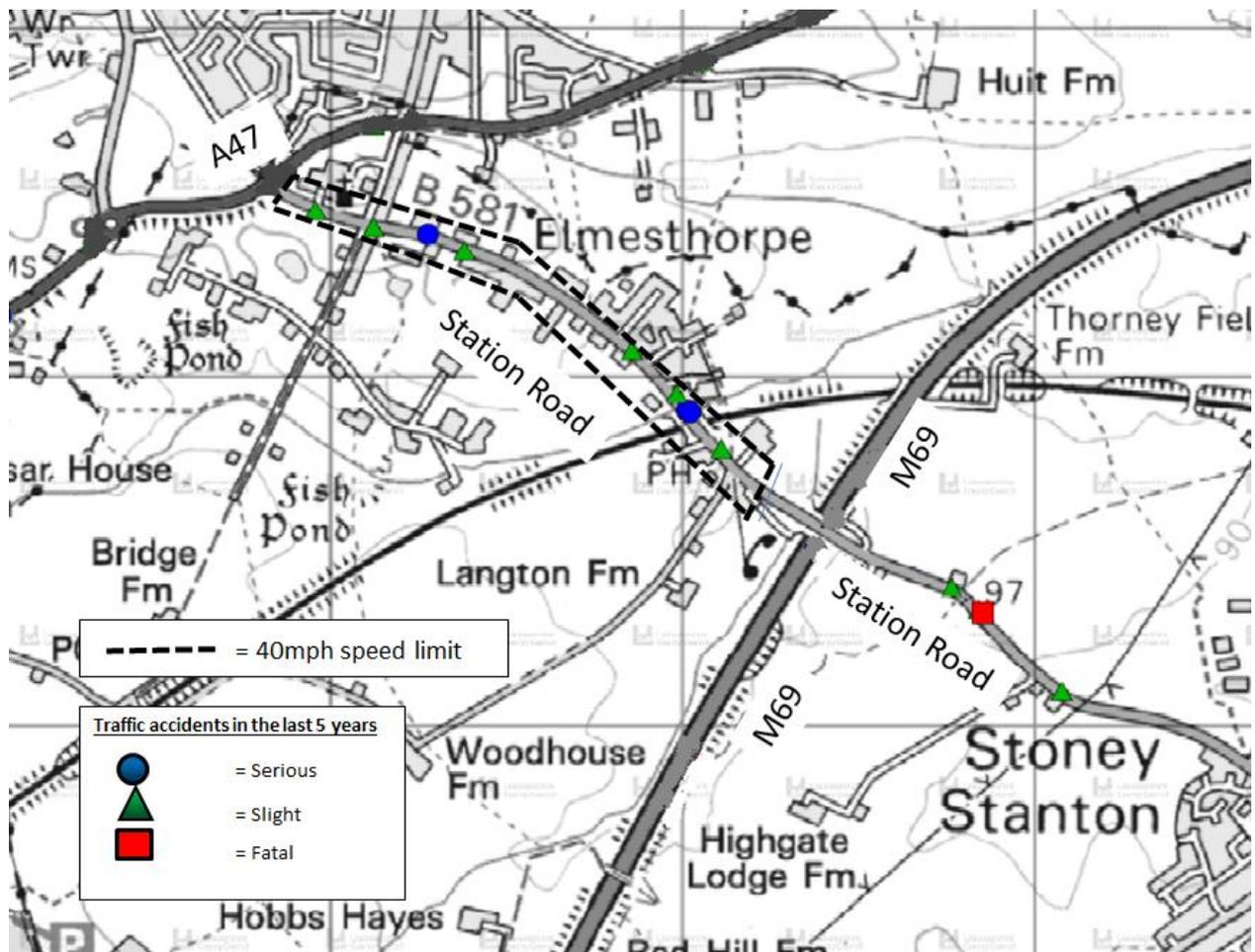


Figure 1 - accident data

7. Analysis of the accident data has been carried out and is summarised below:-
- Nine of the twelve recorded occurred within the 40 mph section in and around Elmesthorpe;
 - two of the collisions were specifically identified by the police attending the scene as 'exceeding the speed limit' to be a contributory factor;
 - four collisions involved loss of control; and,
 - only two previous slight injury collisions have occurred in the latest five year period in the vicinity of the bend, where the recent fatality occurred, one of which involved loss of control.
8. In terms of the work of the County Council at cluster sites, whilst accepting that one accident is too many, the criteria for intervention is where there have been seven or more recorded injury accidents at one site (within a 50m radius) over a five year period, as opposed to over an extended length. The criteria for this was noted by the Environment and Transport Overview Scrutiny Committee on 12 September 2016.
9. Using a nationally utilised Department for Transport (DfT) cost benefit analysis method (COBA) the predicted collision rate is 2.67 per annum, but this calculation is based upon a link length and does not take into account any adjoining junctions, which would significantly increase this figure. A more accurate indicator would be the national average collision rate for rural roads, based on DfT Reported Road Casualties Great Britain 2017 (Table: [RAS 10002](#)).

This shows that on rural 'B' roads the rate is 248 per billion vehicle kilometres travelled, the actual rate on this section of the B581 is 130 per billion vehicle kilometres, approximately 47% below the national average number of injury collisions for this type of road.

10. With regards to the fatal incident in January 2019, as this is still subject to investigation by Leicestershire Police, the County Council is unable to comment at the present time. An interim date of 4 June 2019 has been set for the Inquest into the incident. Leicestershire County Council will consider the findings of the Coroner following the Inquest.

Speeds

11. Updated speed data was taken in March 2019 either side of the bend between the M69 Bridge and the 30 mph limit in Stoney Stanton (adjacent to the Acacia property). This showed that two way speeds on the north western side of the bend were an average of 44.6 mph with the 85th percentile speed (the speed at which 85% of drivers are travelling at or below) of 50.0 mph. The survey on the south eastern side of the bend showed average and 85th percentile speeds of 44.9 mph and 50.3 mph respectively. This shows that a very high proportion of drivers approach the bend at speeds below the speed limit.
12. Additionally, the latest speeds available for Elmesthorpe were taken in two locations. In January 2018 these were taken near the junction with The Roundhills and showed average speeds of 34.8 mph and an 85th percentile speed of 40.1 mph. There was also a survey undertaken in April 2018 near the junction with Wilkinson's Lane that showed similar speed data with an average speed of 36.2 mph and an 85th percentile speed of 40.1 mph. Whilst, unfortunately, some drivers still exceed the speed limit the compliance along the stretch of the B581 in Elmesthorpe is generally good.

Assessment

13. Bearing in mind the large number of requests the Council receives on an annual basis for highway improvements current practice is to consider essential safety works only. The assessment process is data led and includes an evidence based assessment with set criteria focussing on the number of recorded injury accidents, along with any records of excessive speed. Additionally, based on the data available we also have to be sure that whatever changes we make will actually make a difference.
14. With regards to its road safety priorities, taking into account the data relating to the B581, noted in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 above, the County Council is unable to justify any investment in highways measures on a casualty reduction basis at the present time.

Speed Limit guidance

15. The Council follows national speed limit guidance issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) with regard to following the setting of local speed limits. The speed limit in place should largely be self-enforcing and is based on the extent of roadside development, the amount of residential properties and of pedestrian

activity. All speed limit proposals also have to be consulted on with Leicestershire Police, who are responsible for the enforcement of speed limits.

16. The section of the B581 from the A47 junction to just west of the M69 bridge is set at 40 mph as properties are not continuous on both sides of the road and are often set back from the road side and therefore this speed limit conforms to current speed limit guidance. The section of the B581 between Elmesthorpe and Stoney Stanton is largely rural with very little development on either side and therefore current guidance suggests that this is correctly set at national speed limit.

Resource Implications

17. The estimated cost of preparing this report, including undertaking the surveys is £1,000.

Conclusion

18. Having considered the accident and speed data collected and considering the national guidance that the Council follows when setting or amending speed limits, it is unable to agree to a reduction in the current speed limits on the B581 Station Road between Elmesthorpe and Stoney Stanton.
19. Based on the analysis of the data, unfortunately there are no locations on this length of the B581 that meets the current criteria for County Council intervention of a proven accident record at a cluster site. Additionally, the accident rate for this part of the B581 route is lower than the national average accident rate for this type of road.
20. The Council can advise that an initial inquest into the fatal incident on 7 January 2019 is to be held on 4 June 2019 and that it will consider the findings of the Coroner's report.
21. The Lead Petitioner will be sent a copy of the report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

22. None.

Officer to Contact

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Equality and Human Rights Implications

23. There are no specific equal opportunities implications to note as part of this report.

Background Papers

12 September 2016 - Environment and Transportation Overview and Scrutiny Commission Report – Road Casualty Reduction in Leicestershire and Future Approach to Casualty Reduction:

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1044&MId=4781&Ver=4>

Department of Transport Reported road accidents (RAS10)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/ras10-reported-road-accidents>

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