

Transport and Parking Working Party report

Subject: 20mph Zones and Speed Limits – Update on Review of Strategy

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1. Purpose of Report

1. Background

1.1. A report titled '20mph Zones and speed Limits – Review of Strategy 2023' was presented to February 2023 meeting of this Working Party. a link to the report is below:

<https://www.torbay.gov.uk/DemocraticServices/documents/s136146/Review%20of%2020mph%20zones%20in%20residential%20areas%202023.pdf>

1.2. The Working Party supported the following Outcome at that meeting:

'The Council continues with the programme of implementation of 20mph zones to locations identified as Category A within the report to the Transport Working Party of May 2018, and; A revised Strategy is developed for the next phase of implementation, which will focus on residential areas surrounding the Schools listed in Appendix 1 to the report, and The extent of the proposed zones will be agreed in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Environment and Culture and the views of the Transport and Parking Working Party, will form part of the consideration process'.

1.3. Since the above outcome was supported, SWISCo's Highways Officers, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead have continued with the implementation a 20mph zone in the Fore Street, Barton, Torquay area and progressed the design and consultation of schemes for the Queensway Area, Torquay and the Fisher Street area, Paignton. All of these were areas identified as 'Category A' within the report to the Transport Working Party of May 2018.

1.4. In addition, Highways Officers have been developing a revised strategy for the next phase of implementation in liaison with the Cabinet Lead, focusing on the areas surrounding the schools, which were listed in Appendix 1 to the February 2023 report to this Working Party, which detailed the six School sites on major routes, that currently have advisory 20mph zones.

1.5. Appendix 2 to the February 2023 report listed other school sites which may be considered as a second phase of implementation. These have not been progressed at the present time and may be subject to a future report to the Working Party.

1.6. The proposed zones within this report have been developed by first considering whether 20 mph zones in the School locations would need to be focused on the locations immediately adjacent to the school site, or whether there were opportunities to expand those areas into surrounding residential streets, giving due consideration to the fact that the extent of the zone would be likely to suggest encouragement of an increase of the speed limit to the standard 30mph limit.

1.7. In order to rank the six locations into priority order, a scoring matrix, as supported by the Transport Working Party in November 2018 was used by officers, taking a number of factors into consideration. The scoring matrix and accompanying report can be found on the link below:

<https://www.torbay.gov.uk/DemocraticServices/documents/s63223/JC%20-%20TWP%2020mph%20in%20Residential%20Streets%20Scoring%20Matrix%20FINAL.pdf>

1.8. Proposed Road Safety Initiatives 2023/24 were reported to and supported by this Working Party in October 2023 and this included reference to this revised strategy. Members were advised that available resources would be likely to allow the progression and implementation of 2-3 sites in year 1 of this revised Strategy.

<https://www.torbay.gov.uk/DemocraticServices/documents/s142315/Road%20Safety%20Initiatives%202023%2024.pdf>

2. Reason for Proposal and its benefits

2. Position

2.1.1 Following the support of the Transport and Parking Working Party in February 2023, 20 mph zones have been developed and progressed for the following priority schools, which were listed in Appendix 1 to that report:

- Hayes School (Totnes Road & St Michael's Road) (Hayes Road already has permanent 20mph zone)
- Cockington School (Avenue Road & Mill Lane areas)

- Sacred Heart School (Cecil Road area)
- Barton Academy (Barton Hill Road)
- Torquay Academy (Barton Road & Cricketfield Road areas)
- St Cuthbert Mayne (Teignmouth Road & Westhill Road areas) (could include St Margaret's and Homelands Schools).

2.1.2 All of the above School locations currently have advisory 20mph limits, which are identified by signs with flashing beacons, these are not however enforceable by the Police. This proposed strategy will involve the implementation of permanent enforceable 20mph speed limits. These limits will be in operation at all times. Time related legally enforceable speed limits are not permitted.

2.1.3 Locations have now been considered in terms of recommending the proposed extents of the 20mph zone and their relative priority using the scoring matrix, which was developed in 2018 as part of the original strategy. The considerations for each site are as follows:

Hayes School (Totnes Road)

This site is on the A385 Totnes Road, which is a highly trafficked distributor road, and as such there is a high level of pedestrian to vehicle conflict. There is a School Crossing Patrol in operation.

The level of immediately affected residential properties is minor on Totnes Road and a permanent reduction in traffic speeds would have the added benefit of slowing traffic approaching the junction of Hayes Rd onto Totnes Road, which at times can be difficult to negotiate due to limited visibility.

It should however be noted there have been no reported fail to stop incidents at the School Crossing Patrol site in 2023 or any injury collisions (over the last 5yrs) in the area being proposed for the 20 zone.

Expansion into the surrounding residential areas is possible, however there are many interconnecting streets in this area, and it would be difficult to include these streets without considering a scheme, which would go far beyond the focus of slowing traffic in the vicinity of the school.

It should be noted also that an existing 20mph zone is in operation, adjacent to the School in Hayes Road and it is also recommended that this zone is expanded slightly to include Whitley Road, due to its steep decent towards the school entrance.

The proposed zone is shown in **Appendix 1** to this report.

Cockington School (Avenue Road & Mill Lane areas)

This site is on the A3022, Avenue Road, which is a highly trafficked main road and, as such there is a high level of pedestrian to vehicle conflict. There are School Crossing Patrol sites both on this road and also on the adjacent section of Mill Lane.

There are a few residential and guest houses in this area, as such there can be a number of drivers and pedestrians unfamiliar with the location and/or making turnings to access properties here.

This location has had 4 fail to stop incidents at the School Crossing Patrol site in 2023 and 6 injury collisions over the past 5yr period in the proposed zone area.

It is recommended that there is little advantage in considering an expansion of this area into any surrounding streets.

The proposed zone is shown in **Appendix 2** to this report.

Sacred Heart School (Cecil Road area)

This site is on the B3060, which is a highly trafficked distributor road and as such there is a high level of pedestrian to vehicle conflict. There is a School Crossing Patrol in operation at this site. There is additionally a dense and narrow road layout for nearby properties that may benefit from being included within this zone.

The road has one school, plus Fire Station and is a mainly residential area with high density housing.

The location has had no reported fail to stop incidents at the School Crossing Patrol site in 2023 but had 4 injury collisions (over the last 5yrs) in the area being proposed for the 20 zone.

There are two existing 20mph zones in nearby areas, namely Southfield Road/Oldway Road and Winner Street/Well Street. It is therefore possible to consider an expansion of this area to link the proposed School location to the existing Zones, thus creating a wider connected residential 20mph for this area of Paignton.

The proposed zone is shown in **Appendix 3** to this report.

Barton Academy (Barton Hill Road)

This site is on a highly trafficked distributor road and as such there is a high level of pedestrian to vehicle conflict. There is a school crossing patrol in operation.

The location also includes a busy signal controlled junction, a zebra crossing facility at the school crossing location, a church and church hall plus links to roads exiting from the Hele residential area.

The location has had 2 reported fail to stop incidents at the School Crossing Patrol site in 2023 but had 5 injury collisions (over the last 5yrs) in the area being proposed for the 20 zone.

An existing 20mph zone has been recently implemented to the nearby Fore Street, Barton location, however linking this to the proposed zone is likely to be problematic, given the number of connecting residential streets.

As the School is also accessed from the rear (Orchid Way) and from Danvers Road, it is proposed that the proposed zone would benefit from the inclusion of these roads and the adjacent section of Beechfield Avenue.

The proposed zone is shown in **Appendix 4** to this report.

Torquay Academy (Barton Road & Cricketfield Road areas)

This site is on 2 highly trafficked distributor roads and as such there is a high level of pedestrian to vehicle conflict.

This location consists of 2 zebra crossings on each road, a busy mini roundabout junction, a school with accesses onto both roads plus residential properties.

This location has no School Crossing Patrol. However there have been 12 injury collisions within the proposed zone here in a 5 year period.

There is little advantage in extending the proposed zone into surrounding residential streets, apart from connecting Cul-de-Sacs, however there is an opportunity to connect this to the existing 20mph zone for Barton Road to the south of the mini roundabout.

The proposed zone is shown in **Appendix 5** to this report.

St Cuthbert Mayne (Teignmouth Road & Westhill Road areas)

This site is on two highly trafficked distributor roads and as such there is a high level of pedestrian to vehicle conflict.

The location consists of 2 zebra crossings on Westhill Rd (one with a School crossing patrol) with a proposed 3rd controlled crossing being considered on Teignmouth Rd as part of the Road Safety Initiatives 2023/24, there are two schools in this area, a primary and secondary school plus a busy double mini-roundabout.

Lower speeds could help improve safety certainly during school times and encourage safer movements at the roundabouts.

The location has had no reported fail to stop incidents at the School Crossing Patrol site in 2023 but had 13 injury collisions (over the last 5yrs) in the area being proposed for the 20 zone.

There is an existing 20mph zone including the roads surrounding the nearby St Margarets Academy and there is an opportunity, given the road layout to include a number of residential streets to link the proposed zone to the existing zone.

The proposed zone is shown in **Appendix 6** to this report.

- 2.1.4 Drawings detailing the proposed zones are included in **Appendices 1-6** to this report. Please note that the areas shown in red are the proposed zones in the vicinity of the schools in question. The areas shown in blue denote areas where an expansion into surrounding streets may be considered and areas shown in green denote any existing 20 mph zones.
- 2.1.5 As stated, a collision site review has been undertaken for each of the proposed zones. It should however be noted that the majority of these cases were not directly related to the school or school pupils and not all were directly attributable to excess speed, however it is accepted that the implementation of lower traffic speeds may contribute to the reduction and severity of collisions in the areas concerned.

2.2. Priorities

- 2.2.1. Following the application of a scoring matrix, Highways Officers have ranked the six sites into priority order, based on the scores. The proposed priority of the six sites is proposed as follows in order:
- Sacred Heart
 - Cockington School
 - Barton Academy
 - Torquay Academy
 - St Cuthbert Mayne
 - Hayes School (Totnes Road).

2.3 Options

- 2.3.1. The views of this Working Party are sought in respect of proposed change of Strategy in the progression and implementation of 20mph zones in Torbay and to the proposed extents of zones, as detailed in **Appendices 1-6**. Members are invited to consider the following options:

Option 1 – Members are invited to consider the information within this report and support the progression of 20mph zones to the six school sites, as supported by the Working Party in February 2023 as listed above and detailed on **Appendices 1-6** to this report, with the inclusion of the proposed areas designated in red (School zone) and blue (potential expanded zone) on the plans, where included, in the priority order listed in 2.2.1. above.

Option 2 – As Option 1 but with the progression of areas designated in red (School Zone) only.

Option 3 – To not progress this revised strategy and revert to continuation of the Strategy agreed in May 2018.

2.4 Consultation

- 2.4.1. The Transport and Parking Working Party are requested to consider this matter and to make their various views known to the Director of Pride in Place and the Cabinet Lead for Pride in Place and Parking. All comments are welcome and a consensus view is not necessarily required.
- 2.4.2. As the programme of schemes is progressed, engagement will be undertaken with Council Ward Members and stakeholders, which will take place prior to the introduction of new speed limits and any associated parking restrictions, if required.
- 2.4.3. New Traffic Regulation Orders are required for any new speed limits, and these will be advertised (both on site and in the local media) and should there be any objections these will be presented to the Cabinet Lead for further consideration.
- 2.4.4. Comments provided by the Transport and Parking Working Party will form part of this wider consultation.

2.5 Risks

- 2.5.1. There is a risk that the introduction of an expansion of a 20mph zone around some schools will not result in the expected speed reductions or casualty reductions.
- 2.5.2. The discontinuation of the current strategy is likely to raise concerns and complaints in locations, which were previously included and programmed for reduced speed limits.
- 2.5.3. The expansion of the implementation of 20mph speed limits and zones will require sufficient budget provision. There is a risk that due to competing priorities and uncertainties over future government grant funding, that such funding may not be forthcoming. Any proposed schemes will need to be considered alongside other priorities for funding.
- 2.5.4. There is a risk that staff resources may not be sufficient to implement the proposed expansion of the implementation of 20mph speed limits and zones within expected timeframes.
- 2.5.5. There is a risk that residents will not be fully supportive of the introduction of 20mph zones in their residential areas and this may result in objections to advertised Traffic Regulation Orders.
- 2.5.6. There is a risk that drivers will not support the fact that a 20mph speed limit will be implemented on these roads at all times and may result in objections and ongoing complaints in respect of the implementation of a permanent 20mph zone.
- 2.5.7. If the expected speed reductions or level of compliance is not achieved in the proposed zones, consideration will need to be given to the provision of additional speed reduction measures, for which funding provision will be required.

2.6 Resources

- 2.6.1. Contained within the Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan (2021/22 – 2026/27) are the details of committed budgets which includes an allocation for Road Safety, 20mph Zones and Minor Works. This budget allows for a number of small minor road safety engineering schemes each year. Any larger schemes need to be considered as separate business cases as part of the authority's capital budget setting process

- 2.6.2. Whilst funding needs to be a consideration in the programming and delivery of new 20mph schemes, it should be appreciated that staff resources are also a major factor and therefore the pace of delivery will not be dictated by the levels of funding alone.
- 2.6.3. For the 20mph zones, which are currently in the process of being progressed and delivered, resources have been commissioned from Torbay Council's partner consultant and it would be the intention to continue their use for the next phase of implementation. The consultant's staff resource for this type of work, along with the resources available from SWISCo's highways teams are however limited and therefore the advice that 2-3 sites should be taken forward in the first instance is based on the availability of staff resources, rather than the level of available budget.
- 2.6.4. Experience of delivering previous schemes demonstrates that the time taken to undertake the required consultation and progression work will relate to the numbers of affected properties within the zone and associated stakeholders. It may therefore be a consideration that reducing the zones to the areas shown in red on Appendices 1-6, as in Option 2 above, may result in schemes being delivered in a shorter timescale than including the wider residential areas as in Option 1.
- 2.6.5. As stated in the February 2023 report a budget cost of £35,000 is recommended for each zone, based on previous scheme costs, however this can vary depending on the size of the zone, the numbers of consultees and the level of support in any zone.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- 3.1 The support of the Working Party is sought for the following proposed outcome:

That, following the implementation of the current schemes for the Queensway area, Torquay and the Fisher Street Area, Paignton, the remaining locations, as detailed in the Strategy for the Implementation of 20mph Zones within Residential Areas, as supported by the Transport Working Party in May 2018 are not progressed further at the present time, and:

That the six school locations listed in this report with the areas identified in Option 1 to this report are progressed as the basis of the next phase of implementation of residential 20mph zones in Torbay, in liaison with the Cabinet Lead for Pride in Place and Parking, and:

That the additional school locations, identified in Appendix 2 to the February 2023 report to this Working Party are further developed, in liaison with Cabinet Lead for Pride in Place and Parking, as and when resources allow and reported to a future meeting of this Working Party.