

RESPONSE FROM NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL HIGHWAYS DEPARTMENT REGARDING REQUEST FOR REDUCING THE SPEED LIMIT ON THE A163

The setting of a successful speed limit is a highly technical matter governed by much research and guidance by the Department for Transport. All the following documents (all are free for download from the internet) are used by NYCC as reference in that process, all these documents are now intrinsically linked:

- Department for Transport (DfT) Circular 01/2013 'Setting Local Speed Limits',
- DfT Traffic Advisory Leaflet (TAL) 1/04 'Village Speed Limits',
- Current NPCC (ACPO) Speed Enforcement Policy Guidelines (2011-2015: 'Joining Forces for Safer Roads'),
- DfT TAL 2/06 'Speed Assessment Framework'.

The implementation of 30mph speed limit is based on simple criteria relating to frontage development and distance, as shown below: -

- 20 or more houses; and
- a minimum length of 600 metres.

But the guidance also provides important key factors that should be taken into account by the local highway authority, these are:

- History of collisions;
- Road geometry and engineering;
- Road function;
- Composition of road users;
- Existing traffic speeds; and
- Road environment.

Speed limits on their own have very little impact on driver perception of the appropriate speed. Drivers generally travel at a speed which they perceive to match traffic conditions and according to other factors, such as the road environment, the weather, parked vehicles, number of junctions, pedestrian movements etc. The road environment is one of the main key factors. In a built-up area it is easy and obvious to all as to why the speed limit is there. It is based on properties facing onto the highway. The development on the A163 is relatively sparse, with a short section where there are properties on both sides of the carriageway (200m), the minimum length is 600 metres. Therefore, the perception for drivers is not one of driving through an urban

area, and drivers perceive that there is not the level of hazards that would be associated with a 30mph speed limit. Therefore, the current 40 mph speed limit is appropriate for this section of road.

The County Council recognise the Parish Council's desire to reduce the current speed limit to 30mph however all the above guidance documents must be used within their full context, without cherry picking, to achieve a safe and effective result. Without cognisance of that guidance any limit is likely to fail, and compliance be problematic. For these reasons, as the Highway Authority we aim to ensure the correct speed limits are consistently applied across the County.