

**BRAYS LANE, ASHINGDON/ROCHFORD
PROPOSED REVOCATION OF EXISTING SPEED LIMIT
DE-RESTRICTION ORDER (PART)**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask Members to consider an objection to the advertised proposal, to revoke part of the existing speed limit de-restriction Order on Brays Lane Rochford/Ashingdon.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Brays Lane forms a vital link for traffic from several local communities (Canewdon, Paglesham, Stambridge) travelling to, and from, Rochford.
- 2.2 Relatively narrow in width, it leaves a rural environment, and enters an urban one as it approaches the Ashingdon Road.
- 2.3 As part of a new development scheme, a mini-roundabout is scheduled to be installed in the near future at what used to be the junction of Golden Cross Road with Brays Lane, a mere 130 metres from the start of the 30mph restriction zone on Brays Lane. The locations are indicated on the enclosed plan. An extension of the existing 30mph restriction zone was recently advertised for consultation as part of the Section 106 Legal Agreement for the new roundabout and development. This was agreed in the interests of road safety to provide sufficient stopping distance for drivers to slow down in time to negotiate the mini-roundabout safely.
- 2.4 In their current position, both the 30mph and de-restriction signs are frequently obscured by overhanging adjacent hedgerows, and the removal of such vegetation is an ongoing maintenance problem. The signs are also struck consistently by wide sided vehicles. The present situation, therefore, is far from helpful in assisting with the compliance and enforcement of the speed limit.
- 2.5 Beyond the 30 mph restriction, the road has a system of street lighting, and under Section 82 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 would be subject to a 30 mph restriction. This is currently de-restricted by Order. Revoking part of this de-restriction Order will allow for the existing 30mph speed restriction to be extended.

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 In the interests of road safety, therefore, the County Council proposes to revoke part of the current de-restriction Order, and relocate the signs

to the nearest possible site where they will be clearly visible to motorists. The change would remain within the section of parish street lighting. Details of these changes are shown on the attached drawing TRA/11/2264.

4. POLICIES

- 4.1 It is considered that the proposal which is being recommended in this report will assist in making Brays Lane a safer environment.
- 4.2 Following the informal and formal publication of the proposal, an objection was received from Essex Police, the details of which are listed below alongside the Area Manager's comments.

5. OBJECTIONS

Objector	Grounds for Objection	Area Manager's Comments
Chief Constable	Objects to proposal on grounds that it does not meet County Policy insofar as the location is rural in appearance being "a narrow two-way carriageway bordered by an extremely narrow grass verge and high hedgerow. There are no properties within the 120 metre section and only one Parish type street lamp fixed to a telegraph pole" – and that "the proposal originated following a maintenance issue whereby the 30 mph terminal sign was being struck by lorries". It is the responsibility of the Highway Authority to ensure the signs are visible at all times.	The Highway Authority is not in a position where it can remove large sections of hedgerow, and is therefore faced with the ongoing maintenance liability involved with keeping the speed limit signs clear of vegetation and visible to drivers, so that enforcement of the existing speed limit is possible. Moving the signs 120 metres eastwards would place them in a location free of vegetation. Also: The construction of a mini-roundabout at the junction of Brays Lane and Golden Cross Road, as part of a new housing development, is in close proximity to the start of the existing 30 mph restriction and would serve as a speed reducing feature as one enters the built up area.

6. SUMMARY

- 6.1 The above proposal is considered to be in the interests of road safety, even though the Police cannot support the scheme.

7. RECOMMENDATION

It is proposed that the Committee **RECOMMENDS:-**

That, notwithstanding the objection received, the Traffic Regulation Order be made as recommended in accordance with the County Council's Standard Order Making Procedure.

N McCullagh

Area Manager, Transportation & Operational Services
Essex County Council

Background Papers:-

All correspondence relating to the proposal are held by the Area Manager at the South Area Office, Rayleigh.

For further information please contact Peter Craig on 01268 771458.

