
**UPPER HAYSDEN LANE, TONBRIDGE - PROPOSED TRAFFIC CALMING
SCHEME AND GENERAL UPDATE**

To: **Tonbridge and Malling Joint Transportation Board**

By: **Tim Read, Head of Transportation**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Electoral division: **Tonbridge and Malling**

Ward: **Judd Ward**

Date: **22nd November 2021**

Summary: This information report outlines progress made to date in relation the request for a reduction in speed limit to 30mph along with traffic calming measures on Upper Haysden Lane, outside The Nexus School, following the previous report to the JTB on 7th June 2021.

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and background

- 1.1 Following a development application at the Nexus School there were conditions applied during the planning stages which required the site owners to carry out non-specified highway improvements on Upper Haysden Lane. Now that the development at the school has progressed the applicants are seeking to fulfil the conditions and planning requirements associated with this site. Works associated with the planning application are being delivered by KCC Education (formerly GEN2 Estates), with input and assistance from KCC Highways.
- 1.2 Upper Haysden Lane north of the A21 is a predominantly rural road with no direct property frontages or accesses on either side. The area is formed of open fields and countryside to the west, and housing set back from the carriageway by several metres to the East. There are 3 side road junctions leading to the residential estate (Masefield Way, and 2 entrances to Molescroft Way), and the access to the Nexus school near the A21 Tonbridge Bypass. The road is a consistent width of more than 7 metres with very good forward visibility north of the bypass which incorporates all of the existing junctions and access points described above.
- 1.3 Nexus is a special school for children and young people with profound, severe and complex needs, many of whom are on the Autistic Spectrum. Following a review of the highway, and road safety audit (RSA), at Upper Haysden Lane

KCC Agreements Team have recommended that measures be introduced to ensure drivers are aware of the presence of the school, which is set back from the public highway, and to encourage drivers to slow down in this area.

- 1.4 At the end of 2020 an initial proposal was designed and advertised to extend the existing 40mph speed limit further south and enhance the existing signage and road markings in the area. A public consultation took place to advertise the change in speed limit which involved the writing and advertisement of a traffic regulation order (TRO). During the consultation process there was a notable number of responses asking that the 30mph speed limit instead be extended from where it currently starts near the junction with Masefield Way approximately 600 metres (650 yards) further south to include the access into Nexus School. Both proposals received a notable number of objections which were detailed in the June JTB report (attached in appendix 2).
- 1.5 Surveys and investigations were carried out on Upper Haysden Lane which highlighted existing driver speeds were too high to safely install a speed limit of less than 40mph with signage alone. Kent Police advised that a 30mph speed limit would be unenforceable and unsafe without physical engineering methods in place to ensure driver compliance.
- 1.6 At the JTB meeting on 7th June 2021 members recommended that KCC Highways officers go back to KCC Education and agree a physical traffic calming scheme to ensure that a 30mph speed limit scheme could be safely implemented on Upper Haysden Lane incorporating the access into The Nexus School. A limited budget had been agreed by KCC Education for highway works associated with the planning application for The Nexus School which was insufficient to cover the costs of physical traffic calming measures. Officers have been working to identify funds to install a scheme in light of the planning requirements, and safety concerns on Upper Haysden Lane. Budgets are yet to be confirmed, but KCC Highways officers have already begun producing the detailed designs for a traffic calming scheme to ensure that when funding is available a scheme is ready to be delivered.



2.0 Discussions with The School and Working Group.

- 2.1 Following the JTB recommendation in June, officers formed a working group to discuss possible ways forward. The working group included the county members for the area, Mark Hood and Paul Stepto, the local TMBC Cllr, April Clark, officers from KCC Education and KCC Highways. An outline scheme proposal was produced during the summer period, and this was presented to the working group on 27th September. The outline scheme proposed a series of physical ‘cushions’ along Upper Haysden Lane for the length of the new speed limit from the A21 bridge. The exact type of cushions is still to be agreed, but rubber bolt down cushions and concrete humps are both being considered and investigated. A stage 1 road safety audit (RSA) was carried out in October and some minor amendments were made to some of the signing and lining shown on the plans following this. In addition to the speed limit signage and traffic calming measures the scheme also includes warning signs to advise drivers of the presence of the school. A copy of the current scheme proposals can be viewed in appendix 1.
- 2.2 Once the initial audit had been carried out officers arranged a meeting on 5th November to present the proposals to representatives at the school and also invited the leader of TMBC. At the time of writing this report this meeting had not yet taken place, but officers will provide verbal updates as required at the JTB meeting.

4.0 Conclusion and next steps

- 4.1 KCC have already conducted the formal consultation process in relation to the legal order (Traffic Regulation Order – TRO) required to change the speed

limit on Upper Haysden Lane. The 30mph speed limit proposal has to be installed within 2 years of when the consultation was carried out, so by February 2023, otherwise the proposals will have to be advertised again and the TRO process started over from scratch. Once the school and the wider working group have had chance to review the amended proposals these can progress to the detailed design stage and a stage 2 RSA commissioned. This would then need to be followed by a formal public consultation to allow residents and members of the public opportunity to comment on the scheme. A full report outlining the consultation feedback and any updates on the final design will then be reported back to the JTB for a final time to request a recommendation as to whether the detailed scheme should proceed to construction. Officers aim to have the report ready to present at the JTB meeting on 7th March 2022.

- 4.2 All construction works will need to be carried out during school holidays to minimise traffic disruption, and to ensure access to the school is maintained during term time. Works will likely take 1-2 weeks to complete so officers will aim to construct any approved scheme during the school summer holiday in 2022.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Outline Design for Traffic Calming Scheme

Appendix 2 – Previous (June) JTB report