
**UPPER HAYSDEN LANE, PROPOSED SPEED LIMIT AMENDMENTS,
TONBRIDGE**

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

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

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Electoral division: **Tonbridge and Malling**

Ward: **Judd Ward**

Date: **7th June 2021**

Summary: This report summarises the consultation outcomes of the developers (GEN2 Estates) proposed speed reduction measures on Upper Haysden Lane. This report explores 2 potential options - 1.) Extend the 40mph limit further south past the A21 Tonbridge bypass to help slow drivers on approach to the school or 2.) Extend the existing 30mph speed limit past Nexus School and remove the existing 40mph speed limit.

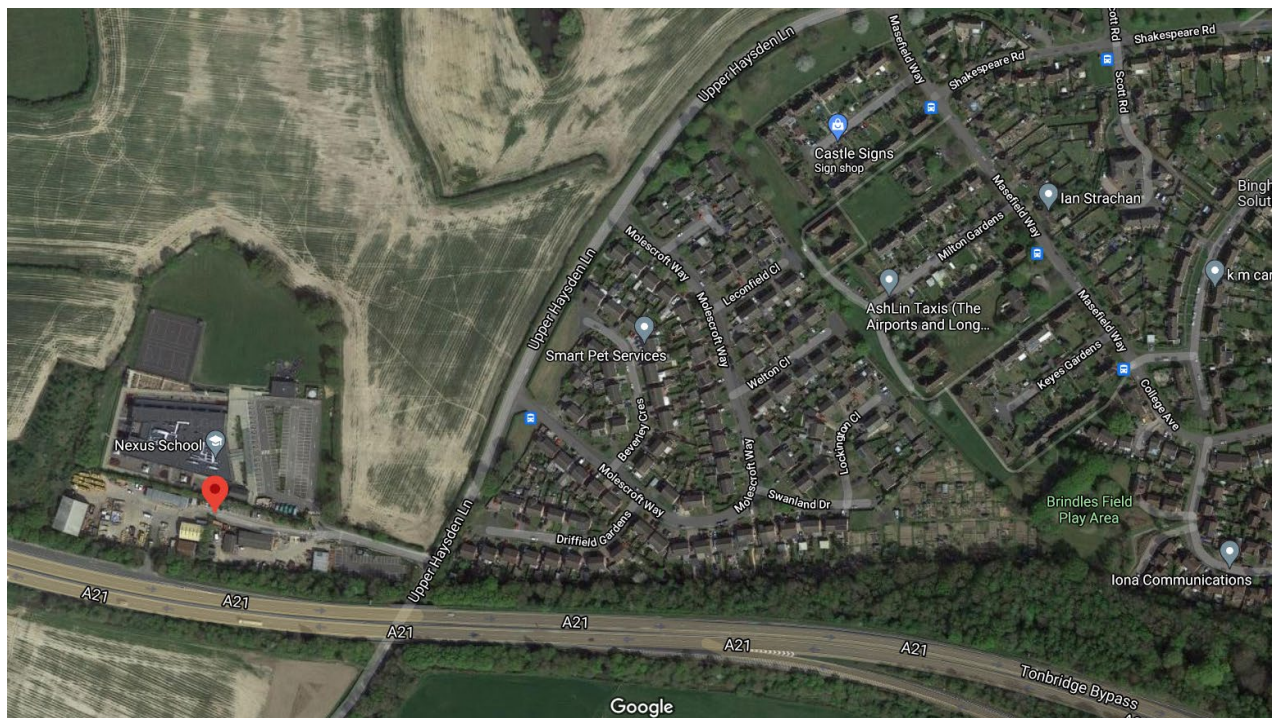
For Decision

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 and any agreed outcomes of this report are being delivered by GEN2 Properties, the body responsible for KCC property in Kent.

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 The initial proposal was to extend the existing 40mph speed limit further south and enhance the existing signage and road markings in the area. A public consultation then 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 will be detailed in the consultation section of this report. It is worth noting that Brook Street which connects to Upper Haysden Lane is currently part of the Tonbridge 20mph experimental order.



Crash Data

- 1.5 The crash data for this site has been analysed in detail and was reviewed again in April 2021 in preparation of this report. There have been no injury related crashes reported on Upper Haysden Lane between the junction of Lower Haysden Lane and the A21 Tonbridge Bypass in the last 5 years. As such this site would not appear on the crash analysis carried out annually by KCC highways, and there is no crash data to be reviewed to support highway changes in this location. However, the changes proposed in this report, if

approved, are to be delivered by development contributions. Figures relating to crash data in Kent can be reviewed using the crashmap website: www.crashmap.co.uk

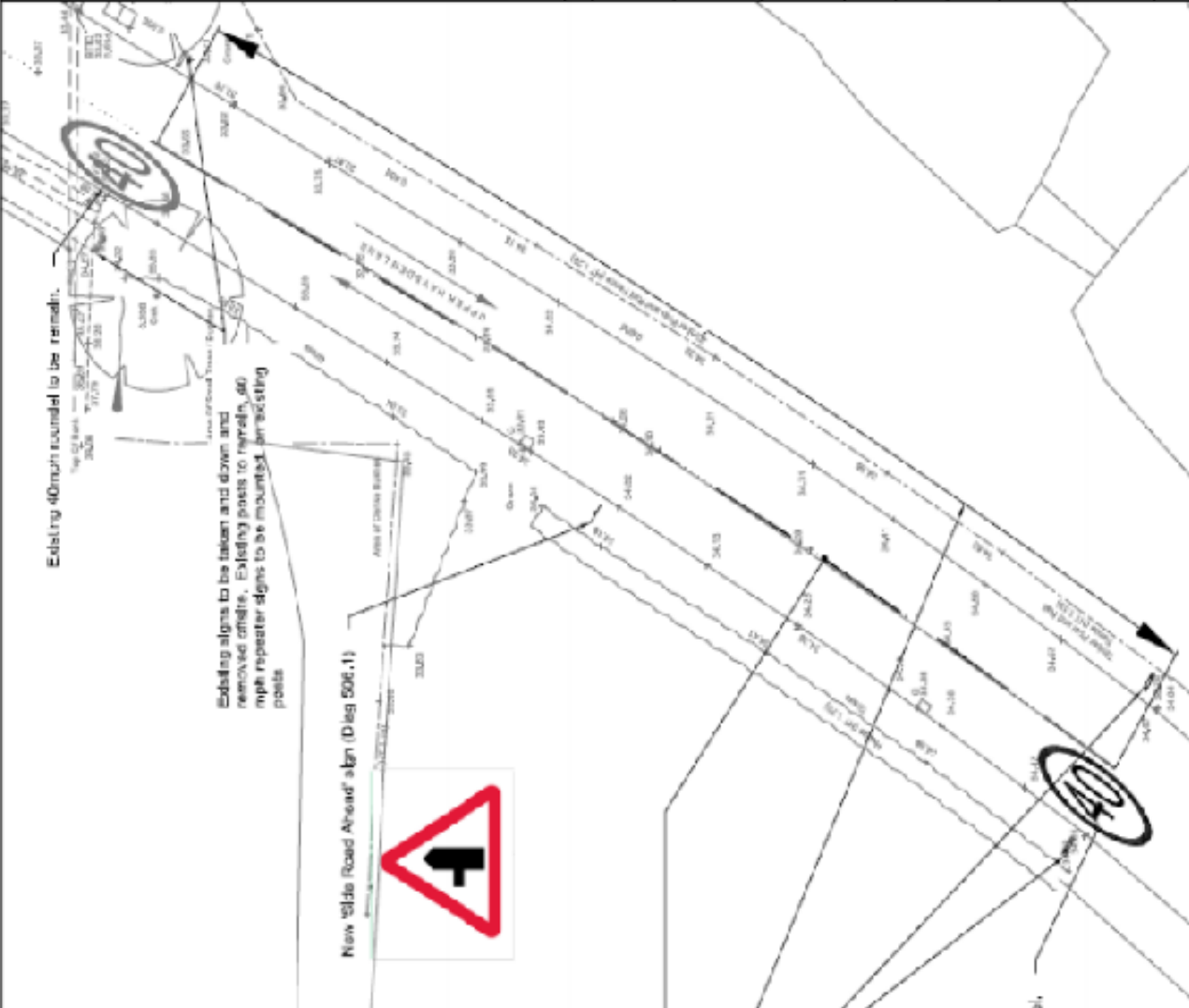
2.0 Consultation

40mph extension

- 2.1 Option 1: The initial scheme proposed was to extend the 40mph speed limit from its current location near the A21 overbridge approximately 50 metres further south to create a longer 40mph speed limit buffer zone on approach to Nexus School. The scheme also proposed additional warning signs to make drivers aware of the school access and enhance the 40mph signage in the vicinity of the school. A formal public consultation based on these proposals was carried out by KCC, which took place between 6th November 2020 and 30th November 2020. A copy of the consultation documentation can be viewed in Appendix 1. The consultation was sent to all statutory consultees including emergency service providers and the elected TMBC and KCC councillors for the area. Notices were erected on site and all consultation documents uploaded to the KCC website, at the following link: [https://kccconsultations.inconsult.uk/Upper Haysden Lane Speed Limit/consultationHome](https://kccconsultations.inconsult.uk/Upper_Haysden_Lane_Speed_Limit/consultationHome)
- 2.2 There was a total of 42 responses to the consultation, with 36 of those objecting to the proposals, and 6 in support. The vast majority of the objectors, 30, submitted a standard response which had been issued via the school with a request that the speed limit instead be reduced to 30mph along the length of Upper Haysden Lane from Brook Street, heading just south past the A21 Tonbridge Bypass where the 40mph speed limit currently starts. The standard response reads: *"The current 40mph speed limit up to the A21 bridge travelling from Brook Street towards Leigh is currently ignored by a significant number of drivers who already accelerate up to 50/60mph in the 40mph zone. These drivers will simply ignore the extension of the 40mph speed limit. The existing 30mph speed limit along Upper Haysden Lane needs to be extended to past the A21 bridge. The turning to Nexus Foundation Special School is just before the A21 bridge but has no sign posting that there is a school down this lane. We would like to be able to teach our special needs students how to cross a road safely but cannot do so when the speed limit on the main Upper Haysden Lane where they would cross is 40mph with drivers travelling along that stretch at up to 60mph. Highways England states in its "Public sector equality duty objectives (2016-2020) and annual progress report" that its ambition is about "Demonstrably putting people at the heart of what we do and how we do it by understanding and considering the different needs of customers and communities in delivering services." Please can you take into consideration the needs of our 221 students with special needs before you implement a speed limit that will prevent them from learning the valuable life skill of crossing a road safely"*.

Support	Object	Standard response	Total
6	36	30	42

- 2.3 Reasons for objecting included concerns that the existing 40mph speed limit is too fast and that drivers currently exceed this speed limit. Concerns were raised that a 40mph speed limit is not suitable to encourage active travel and crossing of this road.
- 2.4 Supporters of the scheme have mentioned that the extension of the 40mph speed limit will encourage drivers to obey the existing restrictions, and any improvements will encourage more walking and cycling in the area.
- 2.5 Other comments stated that there is a lack of signage on Upper Haysden Lane to advise drivers of the presence of the school. Separate from the speed limit scheme being discussed in this report the KCC Schemes, Planning and Delivery (SPD) Team have agreed to fund the installation of warning signs (children crossing signs) on each approach to the school access to advise drivers that children may be crossing in this area.
- 2.6 A copy of the anonymised consultation responses can be viewed in appendix 2, and the scheme proposals are shown in the plan below. See below a plan of the proposals for Option 1: 40mph speed limit extension.



REV	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	CHK	APP
P2	08.10.20	CS	Issue added	CS	CS
P1	13.07.20	CS	Final Issues	CS	CS

Client: GCH2 PROPERTIES

Project: RIDGE VIEW SEN SCHOOL, YECMANS FIELD, TONBRIDGE

Proposed: PROPOSED TRO PLAN

Project	Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
14228	CS	CS	CS	1:200	13.07.2020

FOR INFORMATION P

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Project Reference: A3

30mph extension

2.7 Option 2: A second formal public consultation based on the 30mph speed limit extension was carried out by KCC, which took place between 29th January and 22nd February 2021. A copy of the consultation documentation can be viewed in Appendix 3. The consultation was sent to all statutory consultees including emergency service providers and the elected TMBC and KCC councillors for the area. Notices were erected on site and all consultation documents uploaded to the KCC website, at the following link: https://kccconsultations.inconsult.uk/Upper_Haysden_Lane_Speed/consultationHome

2.8 There was a total of 104 responses to the second consultation, with 23 of those objecting to the proposals, and 81 in support. 22 of the responses consisted of the same standard response which was submitted in reply to the first consultation.

Support	Object	Standard response	Total
81	23	22 of those in support	104

2.9 Reasons for objecting included concerns that these changes are being proposed without any crash data to support such changes, about the scheme being a waste of public money, and there were also concerns that the artificially low speed limit would not be enforced. Some of the respondents mention anti-driver ideologies and referred to their negative views on the blanket reduction in speed limits throughout the borough. Complaints have been raised that there is no numerical evidence to support the reduction in speed limit to 30mph.

2.10 Comments in support of the scheme were that the lower speed limit would encourage walking and active forms of travel, helping drivers to slow down on approach to the built-up area of Brook Street and to help reduce air pollution. There were requests / suggestions that the experimental 20mph speed limit should be extended further to where the existing 40mph limit currently starts.

2.11 Enforcement of the speed limit was raised as a concern during both consultations. Kent Police stated that any speed limit would need to be in the main self-enforcing. For a 30mph speed limit this would require traffic calming (e.g. cushions/chicanes) to be installed in this location which would not be possible within the scope of this development funded scheme, and would not be in keeping with a predominantly rural location such as this.

2.12 A copy of the anonymised consultation responses can be viewed in appendix 4, and the scheme proposals are shown in the plan below. See below a plan of the proposals for Option 2: 30mph speed limit extension.

3.0 Discussion and member comments

- 3.1 The KCC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, who is also one of the local elected members for the area, was made aware of the scheme proposals and the number of responses to the first consultation, and as such agreed with officers that an additional consultation and further assessment and investigation should be carried out.
- 3.2 As with all roads there is often a perception that some drivers do not adhere to speed limits and in such cases the highway authority encourage residents and members of the public to report such concerns to Kent Police or Speedwatch to request vehicle speeds be reviewed and enforcement be carried out. KCC often carry out automated traffic surveys (ATC's) to ascertain actual driven speeds to evidence if there is a notable speeding issue. KCC commissioned a weeklong ATC survey, from Thursday 11th March to Wednesday 17th March, to ascertain actual speeds on Upper Haysden Lane in the vicinity of Nexus School. The survey data summary can be viewed in Appendix 5. The results show that average driver speeds are 37.4mph (37.5mph northbound and 37.4mph southbound), this demonstrates that the current speed limit generally appears to be adhered to. This data also shows that Upper Haysden Lane would not be a suitable candidate for a speed limit reduction to 30mph without a substantial traffic calming scheme being implemented. It is worth noting that all costs associated with this scheme are being funded via development contributions from the application to expand Nexus School, and a traffic calming scheme would be beyond the scope of funds available in that funding pot. During the planning application process discussing the expansion of the school, the suggested improvements were to extend the existing 40mph speed limit further south to create a buffer zone on approach to the school access.
- 3.3 The developers funding the works have agreed to progress the speed limit amendments if they are approved by KCC as the local highway authority, however they have confirmed that they will not be able to finance a traffic calming scheme. The planning condition relating to this scheme specified a sum of money for highway improvements associated with the development of the Nexus School and there is no additional funding source to bolster this. As such only the signing and lining improvements detailed in this report will be possible within the scope of this developer led scheme.
- 3.4 Some of the consultees have made reference to further proposed expansion of Nexus School in future which will likely lead to an increase in pupil numbers. It is recommended that when/if any further planning applications are submitted that additional planning conditions be investigated to help with the delivery of traffic calming and crossing improvements on Upper Haysden Lane in the future.
- 3.5 KCC officers from the Schemes, Planning and Delivery (SPD) Team have reviewed the proposals in detail and feel that the proposed 40mph extension, with additional highways signage and road markings, will help to enhance highway safety in the area whilst still maintaining a speed limit which is enforceable and within the current national standards for setting local speed limits in England (Setting Local Speed Limits DfT circular-01-2013). The

provision of warning signs on approach to be provided by SPD team will also highlight the presence of the school.

- 3.6 Officers in the KCC Development Planning team have advised that there is a draft allocation in the TMBC local plan for new homes in the vicinity of the Nexus School, which may require access from Upper Haysden Lane. If / when this development occurs this will alter the road environment and at that time officers will ask for further contributions towards highway improvements which would likely include a reduction in speed limit to 30mph.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 As outlined above these proposals are being promoted by the developer, GEN2 Estates, in response to a planning recommendation by KCC Highways Officers which was applied during review of the expansion of Nexus School. The comments from the KCC Highways Officer in relation to the planning application were as follows:

I write to confirm on behalf of the highway authority that I have no objection to this application subject to the following additional measures:-

- *Engagement with this authority to extend the 40mph speed limit, including implementation of an interactive speed limit sign and a side road ahead sign as advised in the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit. This work should be undertaken in accordance with the County's adopted 3rd party Traffic Regulation Order procedure and carried out in parallel to construction of the development, should it be approved.*
- *Implementation of the footway and bollards adjacent to Upper Haysden Lane as proposed.*
- *It is also considered that give way markings should be included at the junction to the main car park to give priority to traffic on the access road from beyond this point.*

KCC have conducted the formal consultation process and gathered the details for this report in accordance with the KCC TRO process. GEN 2 Estates have funded all costs associated with the schemes outlined, including the design and officer time for KCC to carry out the consultation and produce this report. There is a limited, and already specified budget, which was agreed at planning in relation to the developer funded highway improvements outside Nexus School. SPD officers have carried out surveys and additional investigations to help support the decision-making process from KCC internal budgets. Based on the views raised by Kent Police, the results of the survey data and the high number of individual objections to the 30mph speed limit extension officers do not recommend that the 30mph speed limit be progressed.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 That the proposed 30mph speed limit proposal be abandoned, and be reviewed at a later date following any subsequent planning applications. The amendments to the 40mph extension proceed along with the additional

signage and other measures outlined in the scheme plan shown on page 5 along with the additional warning signage detailed in this report. All costs associated with the delivery of the speed limit change are to be borne by the developer.

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Reporting to:	Tim Read – Head of Transportation

Appendices

Appendix 1 – 40mph scheme consultation documents

Appendix 2 – 40mph scheme anonymised consultation responses

Appendix 3 – 30mph scheme consultation documents

Appendix 4 – 30mph scheme anonymised consultation responses

Appendix 5 – ATC survey data