

Enforcement of 20 mph Speed Restrictions

Date: 16th March 2010

To: Cambridge City West Area Committee

From: Inspector Steve Kerridge, Cambridge City Police Sector Inspector

1. Background

1.1 At the West Area Committee held on 10th December Councillors were informed of the results of a speed survey that had taken place in Emmanuel Road. This area is subject of a 20 mph Zone and complaints had been received that users of this stretch of road, mainly taxis, buses and emergency service vehicles, regularly exceeded the speed limit.

1.2. The survey data confirmed (October 2009) that over 50% of vehicles using this road exceeded the figure appropriate for prosecution (25mph). The meeting was also informed the road did not currently comply with necessary traffic calming requirements for a 20 mph 'Zone' to be enforced.

1.3. Councillors queried this position and in light of the current discussions taking place concerning the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit in other parts of the city centre, it was agreed to report back on the issue of enforcement.

2. Current Situation

2.1 **20 mph Zones** – Their purpose is to create conditions where drivers naturally drive at 20 mph because of the general nature of the location, or as a result of traffic calming measures.

2.2 A 20 mph zone is indicated by 20 mph zone entry and exit signs as specified in Traffic Signs regulations and General Directions 2002 (TSRGD 2002) diagrams 674 and 675.

2.3 The statutory provisions - (direction 16(1) TSRGD) requires that no point within the zone must be further than **50 metres** from a traffic calming feature (unless in a cul-de-sac less than 80 meters long). Direction 16 also gives full details of what is a traffic calming feature.

2.4 No additional speed limit signs are needed in a zone as speeds should be low enough.

2.5 If a zone is set up and there are not traffic calming features within 50 meters of the signs and each other calming measure the zone becomes unenforceable.

2.6 In Emmanuel Road no traffic calming measures currently exist from the 'rising bollards' to the junction with Parker Street/Drummer Street, a distance of at least 90 metres.

2.7 **20 mph speed limits** - Unless an order is made and the road is signed to the contrary a 30 mph speed limit applies where there are three or more lamps throwing light on the carriageway and placed not more than 183 meters apart. Section 82(1) (a) Road traffic Regulation Act 1984 Part VI. So for a 20 limit to apply in a built up area it must have signage.

2.8 Traffic authorities have a duty to erect and maintain prescribed speed limit signs. Section 85 RTRA 84.

2.9 Special authorisation must be sought from the Secretary of State if traffic authorities deviate from signs which are prescribed.

2.10 Direction 11 of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 (TSRGD 2002) defines the requirements for the placing of speed limit repeater signs. This states that speed limit repeater signs cannot be placed in built up areas with a 30 mph limit. Therefore if a 20 limit is ordered it will require 20 mph repeater signs to enable the speed limit to be enforced. This is unless a 20 mph zone is introduced.

2.11 A person who fails to conform to a speed limit is charged with an offence under Section 89(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Schedule 2 of the Road traffic Offenders Act 1988. If doubt exists about a restricted area being adequately signed or engineered it places any prosecution in doubt. If doubt exists Cambridgeshire Constabulary will not instigate proceedings.

2.12 20 mph limits are only suitable where vehicle speeds are already low. Department of Transport guidance suggest where mean speeds are 24 mph or below (DfT circular 01/2006 paragraph 82.)

2.13 A 20 mph speed limit is indicated by terminal speed limit signs and 20 mph repeater signs at regular intervals along the roads covered by the limit. If the signs are not present the speed limit cannot be enforced.

3. Enforcement Policy

3.1 The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) thresholds take into account equipment errors. The prosecution limits for 20 mph are therefore 25 mph for a fixed penalty and 35 mph for a summons.

3.2 **Cambridgeshire's Policy** - The Road Safety Partnership has considered the 20mph limit roll out during 2010 and the set expectations of all agencies and stakeholders.

3.3 The following principles were agreed:

- All partnership members will support schemes which are intended to reduce road casualties.
- The national data available indicate that 20 mph limits have a positive impact on casualty reduction.
- The police will support the 20mph pilot by monitoring driver speed and collating speed data during the initial stage of the pilot. This will be managed by the Safety Camera Unit.
- The police will engage actively with the County Council in assessing the impact that 20mph limits have on driver behaviour and evaluating the success of each pilot.
- As the pilot progresses, police action will comply with national ACPO policy which supports targeted speed enforcement activity in 20mph areas if the mean vehicle speed has been reduced to no more than 24mph and police enforcement action is required in response to a specific problem identified through the pilot scheme and confirmed by speed survey data.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The police will not enforce any speed limit where signage or other regulatory requirement is not satisfied. This currently includes Emmanuel Road.

4.2 Enforcement will take place in 20 mph limit areas subject to the above requirements being satisfied.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Councillors are requested to note the contents of this report and comment accordingly.