

Staploe Parish Meeting About Speeding and Speed Limits 9th March 2023 held at 7pm to 7.30pm in Colmworth Village Hall

Present: Cllr. J. Ibbett, Cllr. P. Yockney, Cllr. G. Meola, Cllr. V. Zwetsloot, Andrew Prigmore (Bedford Borough Council Highways Department), Borough Cllr. T. Wootton and 8 members of the public

- In September 2022 the Parish Council consulted residents in the parish regarding speed limits in Duloe.
- The consultation can be found on our website <https://staploe-pc.gov.uk/survey-about-duloe-speed-limits-and-closure-of-woodhouse-lane/>

Duloe Speed Limits - proposed

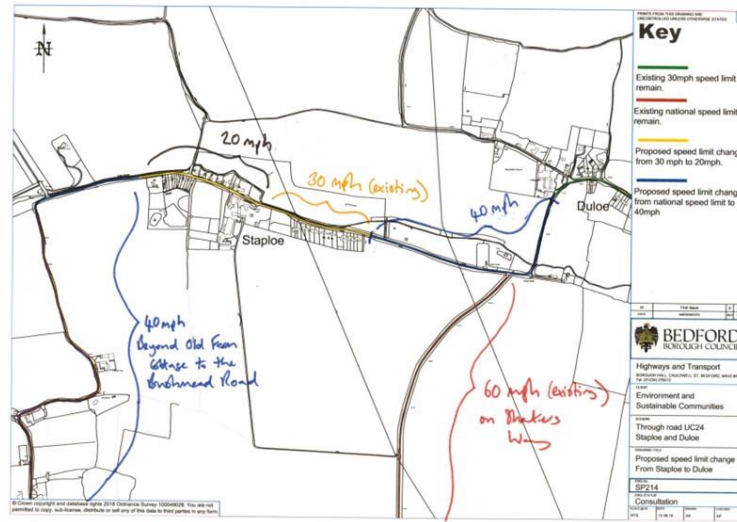


- 29/30 respondents supported the extension of the speed limit from College Farm in Duloe to Duloe Butts. 1 person objected. Comments: waste of time unless enforced; please extend the 20mph zone all the way through Staploe.
- 27/30 respondents supported the reduction of the speed limit throughout Duloe to 20mph. Comments: needs enforcement, need average speed cameras, businesses eg. wedding venue / solar developers should pay for speed cameras, need 20mph in eastern Staploe too, concern re too many speed limit changes in a short distance.
- A resident of Honeydon asked for the 30 and 40 limits to be reduced to 20 and 30
- A Councillor was concerned that many different speed limits would render average speed cameras ineffective.
- NB. Closure of Woodhouse Lane: there were responses from 26 households of which 21 were in favour of closing Woodhouse Lane after number 61 and 5 against. However, of the 5 that were against closing the road, 2 lived closest to the proposed closure. They (and several others) expressed concern that it would push the antisocial behaviour into the hall car park nearer their houses. Other comments: likely to increase car parking at the playing field which could be a problem during football matches; closure would be better implemented at the junction with the

bridleway to Mount Pleasant; concern about emergency vehicles being cut off; a drop-down bollard better than a horse friendly gate. Therefore the Parish Council resolved not to request a road closure at the moment but to see if operational CCTV can help deter antisocial behaviour.

The Clerk showed slides of the current speed limits in Staploe and Honeydon which are shown below:

Staploe Speed Limits Introduced late 2020



Honeydon Speed Limits Introduced 2018



She also showed speed data from the mobile speed signs. This can be found on our website:

<https://staploe-pc.gov.uk/our-parish-council/speeding/>

LC: the feedback from our consultation was that there was support for more 20mph limits in the parish but people felt that there was no point in introducing them unless there was to be proper enforcement. Average speed cameras seem the best option but how would they work in a parish like ours with three hamlets and with variable speed limits and what are the chances of us getting them?

AP: the government say that in order to introduce a 20mph limit there needs to be evidence that the existing traffic is travelling at an average of 24mph or less. If that is not the case then additional traffic calming measures are required such as chicanes or bumps. Because the police are aware that the traffic should be travelling at 24mph already they have decided not to enforce 20mph limits. They have limited resources and say that since their enforcement regime is for 10% +2 and since the traffic is already supposedly at 24 mph there is no need. Even with average speed cameras they don't enforce all the time – they don't have the resources.

AP: putting up signs with new speed limits often does not change behaviour in the longer term. There are several options. Average speed cameras would be the least intrusive and probably most appropriate in a parish such as ours. However, we would need a 30mph limit throughout Staploe and Duloe and 4 cameras. One at the Bassmead end of Staploe, two at the entrance to Shakers Way and one at the eastern end of Duloe. This would cost £170K to install and £5K per year to calibrate. You can't have mobile sets of cameras which you move around due to the cost of moving them and recalibrating.

AP: even with average speed cameras you will still get people doing 70mph+ When assessing speeds the Borough Council and police tend to look at the 85th percentile which gives a better guide of how fast people are going and average speed cameras can really reduce the speed at which 85% of people travel. In Milton Ernest 85% of people were exceeding the speed limit before the cameras were introduced and this became 85% travelling within the speed limit after they were introduced.

AP: unfortunately the money from fines goes to Central Government and Bedford Borough Council do not receive anything. The cost of calibrating all the Average speed cameras in the Borough every year at £5K per camera is enormous (£250K per year at present).

AP: there are currently 98 requests for speed cameras. Staploe is on the list but not Duloe.

Lucy Crawford requested that Duloe be added. She had intended to request average speed cameras for the parish – not necessarily for one village.

AP: since there is evidence of some compliance in our parish we will not move up the list and are very unlikely to get average speed cameras. Compliance: if 85% of vehicles are travelling at 35mph or under in a 30 or 24mph in a 20 mph speed limit. He was pleased to see that the 20mph limit in Staploe appears to have led to long term reductions in speed from an average of near 30mph to an average of nearer 20mph. He said this was the exception.

A member of the public explained that when there is a wedding at Bassmead the volume of traffic in Staploe doubles and the speeds increase. Could chicanes help?

AP: all traffic calming measures need to be lit so we would need to introduce new street light columns for chicanes and bumps which increases the cost and introduces urban features in a rural village which may not be appropriate. Chicanes need a steady flow of traffic or they make matters worse as people speed through them to avoid waiting for oncoming traffic. Bumps are popular except "not outside my house" – because they add noise from vehicles braking, bumping over them

and accelerating away and they increase local pollution and can cause wear and tear on car suspension.

A member of the public asked what works best in a rural context.

AP: lights, signs and lines are probably best.

A member of the public suggested that £170K for 4 cameras seemed exorbitant – they are not that expensive on the internet.

AP: the procurement process goes out to a formal tender and that was the best price tendered.

Lucy Crawford: when will the survey of Bushmead Road take place?

AP: after the easter holidays

Lucy Crawford: how can we ensure that the roads to Honeydon are closed when the Bushmead Road is closed?

AP: Anglian Water are aware and their director was called into Bedford Borough Council offices to explain why the roads were not closed last time it happened. They do get fined for bad practice. Bedford Borough Council are definitely doing their best to ensure this happens. The issue is particularly challenging when it happens at weekends or late at night.