

Downe village - Road Safety improvement proposal

1 Introduction

This plan represents the wishes of Downe village (via the Residents' Association) in relation to proposed improvements in road safety. It has been drawn up in response to issues raised at the Downe Residents' Association AGM in March 2017. Road safety is a big subject, and could include - traffic speeds, unsuitable vehicles, gridlock and passing difficulties, road signs, effects of Shire Lane closures, fly tipping, parking (lack of, or inappropriate), footways and footpaths, street lighting, danger to pedestrians, danger to or from cyclists, danger to horses etc

This report is seen as the **start** of a campaign of measures to improve road safety in and around the village. Given the wide ranging nature of the subject, this proposal focusses on just one proposal:

Traffic speeds – reduce to 20mph in the central areas and 30mph elsewhere

The issue of unsuitable HGVs in the village has also been a problem, but this is being addressed separately by the Downe Residents' Association with Bromley Council.

2 Summary

In summary, the six proposals for reduced speed limits are:

- Proposal 1 - High Street and close by - set a 20mph speed limit in the centre of the village
- Proposal 2 - Rookery Road - reduce the speed limit to 30mph from the orchard northwards to Holwood Farm
- Proposal 3 - Luxted Road - reduce speed limit to 30mph from West Hill southwards to Berry's Green
- Proposal 4 - North End Lane - reduce the speed limit to 30mph from Mill Lane to Shire Lane
- Proposal 5 - High Elms Road - reduce the speed limit to 30mph from the school to Shire Lane
- Proposal 6 - Cudham Road - reduce the speed limit to 30mph from Christmas Tree Farm to Cudham

This report has been written to explain the proposal and to seek popular support from the village for these reductions. Assuming this is the case, the report will be presented to Bromley Council.

3 20mph limits & zones

The ROSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) factsheet "Road Safety factsheet: 20mph Zones and Speed Limits" states:

There is a significant difference between the characteristics of a 20mph speed limit and a 20mph zone.

***20mph limits** are areas where the speed limit has been reduced to 20mph but there are no physical measures to reduce vehicle speeds within the area. Drivers are alerted to the speed limit with 20mph speed limit repeater signs. 20mph limits are most appropriate for roads where average speeds are already low, and the guidance suggests below 24mph. The layout*

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and use of the road must also give the clear impression that a 20mph speed or below is the most appropriate.

20mph zones use traffic calming measures to reduce the adverse impact of motor vehicles on built up areas. The principle is that the traffic calming slows vehicles down to speeds below the limit, and in this way the zone becomes 'self-enforcing'. Speed humps, chicanes, road narrowing, planting and other measures can be introduced to both physically and visually reinforce the nature of the road.

Given the descriptions above, it is proposed to seek "20mph limit" areas (not zones) as it is felt the additional features of humps, chicanes etc are probably unachievable and would not suit the village environment of Downe. The map below shows the potential area for 20mph limits – marked in red



4 Roads covered

4.1 Downe High Street

Current situation - the speed limit on this section of the road is unmarked, but assumed to be 30 mph due to peripheral signs on the way into the village. Opinions differ on speeds in this road.

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Some say the parked cars limit the speeds (by enforcing a one-way system). Others state that speeding traffic is still an issue. The road is used by the R8 and 146 buses.

Proposal 1 - set a 20mph speed limit in the centre of the village, to extend outwards to:

- The orchard (Rookery Road)
- Just beyond the primary school (High Elms Road)
- Just beyond Christmas Tree Farm (Cudham Road)
- West Hill junction with Luxted Road

4.2 Rookery Road (from North End Lane to Holwood Farm)

Current situation - residents say this is a dangerous road to walk in. The road is used by the 146 bus. The speed limit is 30 mph from central Downe to the orchard, then 40 mph beyond. At the request of Downe Residents' Association and due to concerns raised by residents, Bromley Council installed a speed monitoring system in Rookery Road in September 2017 to monitor traffic speeds. This concluded that – “the 85th percentile speed for North and South bound traffic were 29.3 and 28.5mph and average speed were 24.9 and 25.1mph respectively”.

Proposal 2 - reduce the Rookery Road speed limit from the orchard northwards to Holwood Farm to 30mph (see High Street proposal for village centre to the orchard), and install appropriate signage.

Current road signage -
30 mph speed sign at orchard entrance (40 mph on reverse)
40 mph speed sign (at Holwood)
“Horses for 2 miles” warning (at Holwood)
Two “Slow down now” warning signs (Farthing St, Rookery)
“Slow” road markings and lane correction arrows (at Rookery Cottages)

4.3 Luxted Road incl Single St (from Berry's Green to the High Street)

Current situation - the road is used by the R8 bus. The speed limit on this section of the road is not marked except for one small 30 mph sign entering the village and one small 30 mph sign at Berry's Green

Proposal 3 - reduce speed limit to 30mph from West Hill southwards to Berry's Green, and install appropriate signage.

Current road signage -
One 30mph mandatory speed sign (approaching Berry's Green from Downe)
One 30mph mandatory speed sign (approaching Downe outside farm)
One “unsuitable for HGVs” sign outside Walnut Tree Cottage
Five “Horses” warning signs
Two “Bend” warning signs
Two “Reduce speed now” warning signs
Four chevron signs at bends
One “no footway for ¾ mile” warning sign

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Six "SLOW" markings painted on the carriageway (on way out of Downe) and fifteen "SLOW" markings painted (on way into Downe)
Unclear HGV sign at Berry's Green (no wording)

4.4 North End Lane (from Luxted Road to Shire Lane)

Current situation - The R8 bus uses this route. The speed limit on this road is 30mph from Rookery Road to Mill Lane, then 40mph from Mill Lane to Shire Lane.

Proposal 4 - reduce the speed limit from Mill Lane to Shire Lane to 30mph and install appropriate signage.

Current road signage -
Two 40 mph mandatory speed sign – southbound at Orange Court, northbound at Mill Lane
One 30 mph mandatory speed sign – southbound at Mill Lane
Two "bend" warning signs
One "Horses" warning sign

4.5 High Elms Road (from Shire Lane to the High Street)

Current situation - the speed limit is 30 mph from central Downe to just past the school, and 40mph from then onwards to Shire Lane.

Proposal 5 - reduce the speed limit from the school to Shire Lane to 30mph and install appropriate signage. See High Street proposal for the High Street to school section.

Current road signage -
Four 40mph mandatory speed signs
One 30 mph mandatory speed sign (southbound just before primary school)
Two "school" warning signs (one each way)
One "Bend" warning sign
Two chevron signs at bends
Five "SLOW" markings painted on the carriageway (two on way out of Downe, three on way in)
One "beware golfers" sign

4.6 Cudham Road (from Hangrove Hill to the High Street)

Current situation - the speed limit on this section of the road is 30 mph in the village side of Downe Hall, then 40 mph, from Downe Hall eastwards to Cudham.

Proposal 6 - reduce the speed limit from Christmas Tree Farm to Cudham to 30mph and install appropriate signage (see High Street proposal for Downe Hall to Christmas Tree Farm).

Current road signage -
Two 40 mph mandatory speed signs on exit from Downe (at Downe Hall and Christmas Tree Farm)

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One 40 mph mandatory speed sign at Hangrove Hill on way into Downe
One 30mph mandatory speed sign at Downe Hall on way into Downe
One (blue) "Unsuitable for HGVs" sign on exit from village at Downe Hall
One (blue) "Single track road with passing places" sign on exit from village at Downe Hall
Two "pedestrians" warning signs
One "No footway for 200 yds" warning sign
One "Deer" warning sign
Two "SLOW" markings painted on the carriageway

5 Roads not covered

The following areas are excluded from this report as it is felt they have less of a problem:

- West Hill, Farthing Street, Standard Road, Bellevue Road, Mill Lane, Snodland Close

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