

HS/SK/JP/342377/H024/4/5166  
0115 8786034  
[highwayssouth.en@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:highwayssouth.en@nottsc.gov.uk)  
16<sup>th</sup> October 2009

Mr P Lilley  
25 Holmestead Close  
Costock  
Loughborough  
LE12 6XP

Dear Mr Lilley

**RE: COSTOCK - TRAFFIC SPEEDING CONCERNS**

Thank you for your letter dated 29<sup>th</sup> September regarding the above subject.

With reference to the moving the speed limit, this unfortunately is not as simple a process as it sounds. Moving the speed limit sign would mean changing the legal order of the length of the speed limit and this is a lengthy and costly process. It is important to stress that whilst I share your concerns with regard to speeding traffic, the speed limit is not a target and it is down to the driver to drive at a speed appropriate to the condition and layout of the road. Moreover the County Council have no powers of enforcement and only the Police have powers to enforce speeding traffic offences.

All speed limits have the backing of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). TRO's are legal orders and the length and distance of the order backing the speed limit is determined by many factors, including the road geometry and what the adjacent land use looks like to road users. Drivers expect and respect lower limits and can be influenced when deciding on what is an appropriate speed when they can recognise there are potential hazards such as schools, built up areas and residential streets. On more rural roads drivers tend to drive at higher speeds as they are less likely to encounter hazards and as such the speed limit is higher on these roads. This is the case with the derestricted stretch of road between Costock and East Leake, you will notice that the 30mph limit begins where the built up areas start and as the roads surroundings take on more rural characteristics the speed limit increases to reflect this.

When introducing or amending a TRO consultation has to take place with the Emergency Services amongst other interested parties. Any new speed limits must be implemented with the full support of the Police as they will be the ones enforcing it. The Police will decide if they can realistically enforce the limit before agreeing to the TRO being introduced/amended. The police will not support the lowering of the limit if it is set in isolation or is unrealistic because it is likely that they will not be able to enforce it and the overall effect will have little impact on safety if the vast majority of traffic would not respect it.

Once the consultation process is complete, assuming all are in favour then the order then has to go through the legal process. The entire process can take up to 18 months and a considerable amount of resources to achieve. As you appreciate, amending a TRO is not relatively easy to adjust. Unfortunately given the above there would be no justification for moving the speed limit further out at this current time.

Changing a speed limit may also be allowed where sufficient new development has occurred outside of the speed limit to warrant a lower limit. Unfortunately the access to the new development off Leake Road does fall within the 30mph speed limit therefore there would be no justification for moving it due to adjacent development.

With regard to Vehicle-activated interactive road signs, our policy relating to these signs is as follows:

**Permanent Interactive Speed Limit signs may only be erected in addition to regulatory signs as a response to excessive speed and in accordance with all of the following criteria:**

**i. they should normally only be used on roads subject to a 30mph speed limit.**

**ii. The one-way traffic flow through the site must exceed 400 vehicles in the worst 1-hour peak period (8.00am to 9.00am or 4.30pm to 5.30pm assessed over a minimum of 5 consecutive days or other times as may be appropriate to the site, taking account of specific conditions, events or seasonal variations).**

**And**

**iii. The 85th percentile speed of through traffic must exceed the stated speed limit by 20% or more.**

Please be assured that we do not set these criteria to resist requests, only to ensure that they are placed at locations where there is real need as obviously demand is extremely high. It is my opinion that Costock would not meet this criteria based on vehicle flows; however I have put a request forward for a temporary interactive speed sign at Costock.

In response to your request for speed cameras; the County Council and local police work together closely when identifying locations for safety cameras. Surveys have shown that 60% of all vehicles using 30mph roads do so at speeds in excess of the speed limit. Again, this means we have to prioritise our spending on those roads where speeding is causing an accident problem which is not the case at Costock.

The Parish Council would need to contact the local Police with regard to the community speed watch programme. Also, if a village Gateway scheme is required then the Parish Council would need to approach us to request this; however our funding for Gateways has been significantly reduced over recent years and the Parish Council would need to find their own source of funding for this type of scheme.

As you are aware we can only provide a traffic management solution where there is a treatable pattern of accidents occurring. Our Accident Investigation Unit (AIU) investigation into the accidents on Leake Road revealed that there were no common highway contributory factors in either of the unfortunate fatal accidents that occurred.

AIU have however recommended the white road markings are renewed and made bolder and also that some marker posts to highlight the carriageway edge be installed on the bend at the western end of this section of road to assist road users. I am afraid that I am unable to recommend any further action be taken at this time; unfortunately the County Council is unable to accede to many of the requests we receive due to the limited funding that is available.

In conclusion I am sorry I cannot be more positive with my response but I hope this information is useful to you.

Yours sincerely

Eamonn Harrison  
Service Manager  
Highways South