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**Report of:** Executive Director, Place

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**Date:** 14<sup>th</sup> April 2011

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**Subject:** Objections to the proposed Speed Limit Order for the Shiregreen 20mph Area.

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**Author of Report:** Susie Pryor

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**Summary:**

- To report to the Cabinet Highways Committee on five objections received to the 20mph Speed Limit Order for the Shiregreen area.
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**Reasons for Recommendations:**

- The Shiregreen 20mph area has general local public support. Of those residents who responded, the majority were in favour of the scheme. Given the level of support and the road safety advantages of introducing a 20mph speed limit at this location, it is considered that the benefits outweigh the concerns received. The proposed 20mph speed limit is appropriate for residential streets where there are vulnerable road users, including children and elderly pedestrians.
- A modest reduction in vehicle speeds could benefit the health of local residents, through increased encouragement for physical activity (such as walking to schools and shops, and cycling) and through a reduction in injuries and fatalities associated with road traffic collisions.

**Recommendations:**

- Overrule the objections to the Speed Limit Order for the proposed Shiregreen 20mph speed limit in the interests of road safety.
  - Make the Speed Limit Order in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
  - Approve and construct the 20mph scheme as shown in Appendix A.
  - Inform the objectors accordingly.
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**Background Papers:** None

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**Category of Report:** OPEN

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## Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

<b>Financial implications</b>
YES    Liam Gilligan
<b>Legal implications</b>
YES    Julian Ward
<b>Equality of Opportunity implications</b>
Yes    Ian Oldershaw
<b>Tackling Health Inequalities implications</b>
NO
<b>Human rights implications</b>
NO
<b>Environmental and Sustainability implications</b>
Yes    Ian Oldershaw
<b>Economic impact</b>
NO
<b>Community safety implications</b>
YES
<b>Human resources implications</b>
NO
<b>Property implications</b>
NO

# **OBJECTIONS TO THE PROPOSED SPEED LIMIT ORDER FOR THE SHIREGREEN 20MPH AREA**

## **1.0 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 To report to Members on five objections received to the Speed Limit Order (SLO) for the proposed 20mph speed limit in the Shiregreen Area.

## **2.0 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE PEOPLE OF SHEFFIELD**

- 2.1 The scheme contained within this report would contribute to the 'Protecting and Enhancing the Environment' ambitions of the Council's Corporate Plan 'A City of Opportunity', particularly the 'Safer Roads' priority, with proposals that aim to achieve more appropriate vehicle speeds, improve residents' quality of life and reduce road collisions and casualties.
- 2.2 The process involved in consulting on this scheme supports the 'City of Opportunity' objectives of communities having a greater voice and more control over services which are focussed on the needs of individual customers. Our open, honest and transparent way of working with local residents has increased public confidence in our consultation process.

## **3.0 OUTCOME AND SUSTAINABILITY**

- 3.1 The public consultation has contributed to the 'Putting the Customer First' objective of the 'City of Opportunity' plan, with proposals that respond to customer requests to provide highway schemes to benefit users. These restrictions provide road safety benefits for customers.
- 3.2 If the speed limit is reduced from 30mph to 20mph in this area of Shiregreen, then there are likely to be modest reductions in vehicle speeds and accidents, which would be particularly beneficial to vulnerable road users such as children and elderly pedestrians.
- 3.3 Introducing a reduced speed limit could result in an area perceived to be calmer and safer, which could encourage more people to walk or cycle, thus helping to reduce the city's carbon footprint and improving personal health.

## **4.0 REPORT**

- 4.1 In 2006, Council properties in the Shiregreen area were transferred into the ownership of Sanctuary Housing Association (SHA). Within the Shiregreen stock transfer agreement, the City Council and SHA agreed to a scheme of highway improvement works. These works included a reduction of the speed limit in Shiregreen to 20mph.
- 4.2 The scheme will consist essentially of the installation of 20mph signs, without further engineering measures. At all entrances to the area, there will be 20mph signs and red overlay on the road surface. A plan showing the boundary of the 20mph area is shown in Appendix A. As shown on the plan, Bellhouse Road runs through the area, and would remain at 30mph, as it is a distributor road and a 20mph limit would be inappropriate and would be largely ignored.

- 4.3 There were a total of 70 road accidents resulting in injuries over a five year period in the area, and 9 of these collisions were classified as serious. Twenty two pedestrians were injured, and 12 of these were children.
- 4.4 Approximately 5,000 letters giving details of the proposed 20mph limit were delivered to every property in the area, including local schools and shops. Thirty-seven people (less than 1%) submitted comments by e-mail, letter or phone. The majority of these were in favour of the scheme.
- 4.5 The Police, Ambulance Service, and South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue were sent scheme proposals for comments. No objections were received.
- 4.6 The Speed Limit Order for the Shiregreen 20mph area was advertised in February 2011 and five written objections have been received.
- 4.7 The first objection states "*I would like to object to the 20mph speed limit in Shiregreen on the main grounds that I have lived here 50 years and the one road that causes the most problems is Bellhouse Road, the only road you are doing nothing too*"

Officer response: This is not considered a formal objection to the 20mph speed limit as the writer is objecting to Bellhouse Road remaining 30mph. Bellhouse road is a classified B Road, and the Speed Management Plan for South Yorkshire states that classified A and B roads are unsuitable for 20mph speed limits. The speed limit on Bellhouse Road will remain 30mph. However, the North East Community Assembly have asked highways officers to investigate the feasibility of a traffic calming scheme on Bellhouse Road by Firth Park School, and this is currently being looked into.

- 4.8 The second objection states that "*It is difficult to drive the car efficiently at 20mph*"

Officer response: The effects of speed limits on vehicle emissions depend upon driver behaviour. In urban conditions, some pollutants are likely to increase, whilst others may decrease. However, emissions can generally be reduced if vehicles are driven in a smooth manner, and drivers observe speed limits. Any changes of pollution level and fuel consumption are likely to be negligible.

- 4.9 The third objection states "*I don't see the need for the Council to spend more money on speed reduction in the area as I feel the small amount of accidents don't warrant this sort of measure*"

Officer response: The proposed speed limit reduction is justified on accident grounds. There were a total of 70 road accidents resulting in injuries over a five year period in the area. Twenty-two pedestrians were injured and 12 of these were children. When traffic speeds are 20mph or lower, the risk and severity of accidents can be substantially reduced. If a pedestrian was struck by a vehicle travelling at 20 mph they would likely to suffer slight injuries; at 30 mph they would be severely hurt, and at 40 mph or above most are unlikely to survive their injuries. Portsmouth Council has introduced a 20mph speed limit in residential areas of the City and there has been a modest reduction in accidents and speeds over the relatively short period of operation.

- 4.10 The fourth objection states “*Dumping more road humps on the road does nothing to slow the guilty*” and “*Would it not be more responsible of the City Council to spend money on highlighting road safety and teaching pedestrians especially child and cyclist to be aware of other motorists?*”

Officer response: The 20mph speed limit in Shiregreen will consist of 20mph signs only, and although there are already a few road humps in the area (installed to complement the housing improvements), the current scheme does not include more. The Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity (ETP) team run a number of training schemes and publicity campaigns which aim to improve people’s behaviour on our roads. They also conduct a very comprehensive programme of road safety education in all of the schools and colleges in the areas where most accidents take place, which aims to encourage safer behaviour and attitudes to using the roads from an early age. A key feature of introducing 20mph 'signs-only' speed limit schemes is a complementary ETP 'hearts and minds' campaign in the local community about lower speeds.

- 4.11 The fifth objection states “*my objection is to the main and surrounding roads having humps, bumps and general mounds constructed*”

Officer response: As stated in paragraph 4.9, this scheme plans to introduce a 20mph speed limit only in Shiregreen without further physical traffic calming measures.

- 4.12 As part of the ongoing programme of innovative traffic calming, the give way markings at a limited number of junctions have not been reinstated following carriageway resurfacing works. This is to encourage drivers to slow down and take more care at these locations. This being a technique that has been used successfully both in the Netherlands and a few locations in the UK. There has been some debate with local residents about this approach following reports of damage-only collisions at one junction where the absence of give-way markings was blamed. Following the introduction of the 20mph speed limit proposed within this report, a review of the effectiveness of this measure will be undertaken after a few months. The situation with the road markings at the junctions will be monitored during this period and a report brought to the North East Community Assembly requesting a decision about whether the markings are needed or not.

Relevant Implications:

- 4.13 Funding for the scheme in 10/11 is being provided by Sanctuary Housing Association. In 11/12 implementation of the 20mph speed limit will be funded from the Local Transport Plan. It is estimated that this will cost approximately £50,000. As the LTP budget has not yet been set, Sanctuary will fund this initially, the debt being repaid by the Council over a potential two year period. The Council will also fund local road safety education, training and publicity, including a 'hearts and minds' campaign about lower speeds from the road safety revenue budget.
- 4.14 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been conducted and concludes that the proposals are of universal positive benefit to all local people regardless of age, sex, race, faith, disability, sexuality, etc. Because the proposal relates to increased road and pedestrian safety, it should be of particular positive benefit to the more vulnerable members of society,

including the young, the elderly and disabled people. No negative equality impacts have been identified.

## **5.0 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 The alternate option would be for the speed limit in Shiregreen to remain 30mph. However, this would lead to the same level of road accidents and vehicle speeds.
- 5.2 It is considered that this scheme cannot be delivered without the 20mph Speed Limit Order.

## **6.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 The Shiregreen 20mph area has general local public support. Of those residents who responded, the majority were in favour of the scheme. Given the level of support and the road safety advantages of introducing a 20mph speed limit at this location, it is considered that the benefits outweigh the concerns received. The proposed 20mph speed limit is appropriate for residential streets where there are vulnerable road users, including children and elderly pedestrians.
- 6.2 A modest reduction in vehicle speeds could benefit the health of local residents, through increased encouragement for physical activity (such as walking to schools and shops, and cycling) and through a reduction in injuries and fatalities associated with road traffic collisions.

## **7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 The objections to the Speed Limit Order for the proposed Shiregreen 20mph speed limit be overruled in the interests of road safety.
- 7.2 The Speed Limit Order be made in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
- 7.3 The 20mph scheme over the area as shown in Appendix A be approved and constructed.
- 7.4 The objectors be informed accordingly.

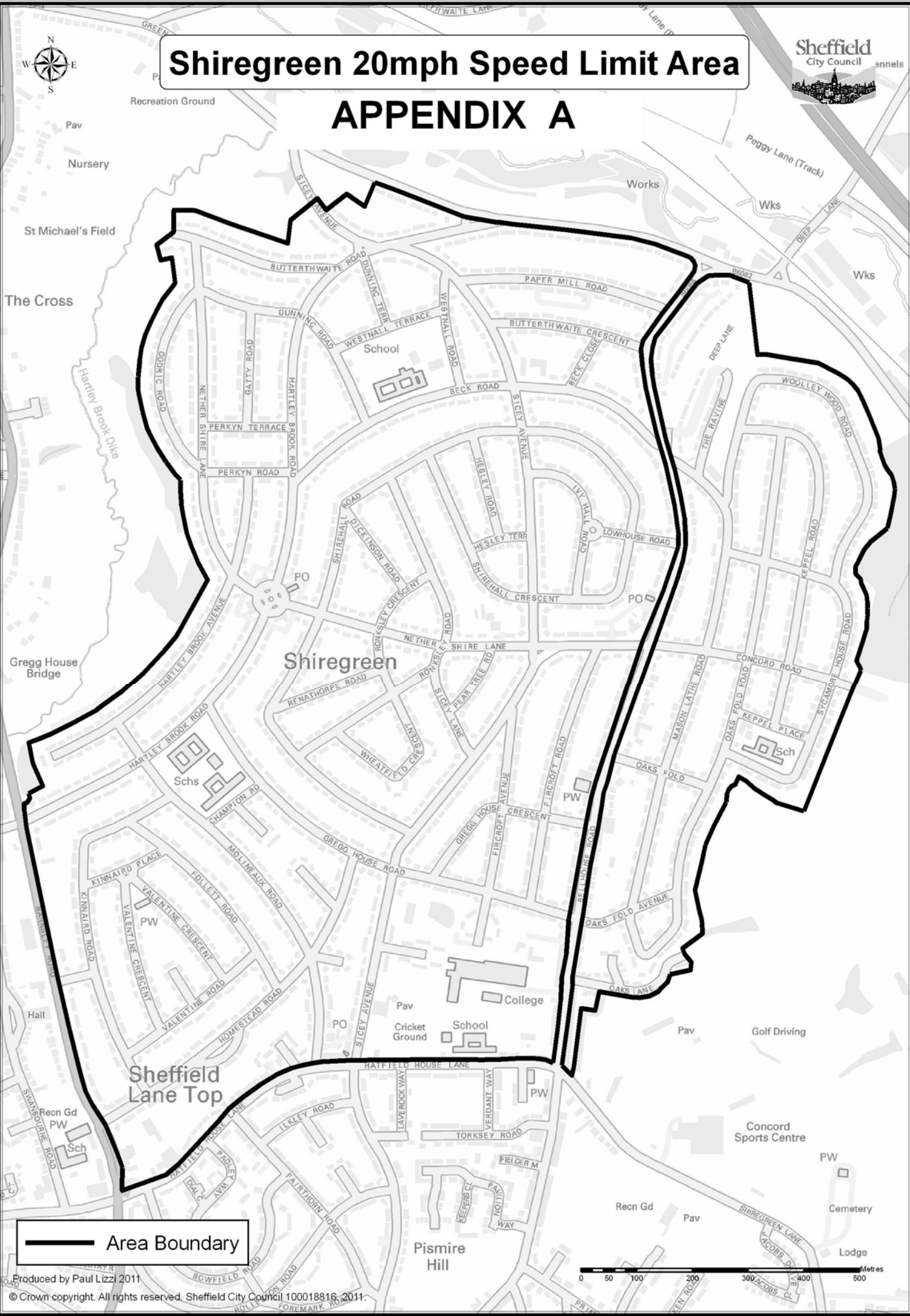
John Bann  
Head of Transport & Highways

14 April 2011

# Shiregreen 20mph Speed Limit Area



## APPENDIX A



— Area Boundary