

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 7th JUNE 2007

PERMANENT 50MPH SPEED LIMIT ON ROUTE A71 BELLFIELD INTERCHANGE ROUNDBOUT TO MOORFIELD ROUNDBOUT, KILMARNOCK

Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the permanent reduction of the speed limit on the A71 between Bellfield Interchange and Moorfield Roundabout from 70mph to 50mph.
- 1.2 To consider objections to the proposed Order.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Over the five years to the end of March 2006, there were 29 personal injury accidents on the route between the Bellfield Interchange and the Moorfield Interchange. These incidents resulted in 2 fatalities, 4 serious injuries and 23 slight injures. Four of the incidents involved vehicles entering or crossing the central reserve.
- 2.2 The A71 dual carriageway, which links East Ayrshire and North Ayrshire, was one of the few sections of dual carriageway in the country that did not have central reserve barrier until the two local authorities erected barriers in April 2006. The improvement will make a significant contribution towards improving road safety by reducing the risk of crossover accidents which can often lead to death and serious injury.
- 2.3 The central reserve barrier was installed to current design standards. However, the erection of the central reserve safety barrier reduced the forward visibility in the offside lanes below the minimum standard required for a 70mph road, as specified in the current design standards. The 50mph limit was therefore needed to ensure that drivers who travel at the speed limit have adequate forward visibility to stop safely in the event of an obstruction on the carriageway.
- 2.4 This section of the A71 is approximately 3 kilometres long, there are three closely spaced interchanges which result in significant volumes of turning and weaving traffic and the route passes through the Kilmarnock “built-up” area. In such circumstances a 50mph speed limit on dual carriageway roads is often adopted in the interests of the road safety.
- 2.5 With the approval of Strathclyde Police a Temporary Road Traffic Regulation Order introducing a 50mph speed limit on the A71 between Bellfield Interchange and Moorfield Roundabout was made and came into operation on the 24th March 2006. The Temporary Order expires in September 2007. Strathclyde Police are responsible for enforcing the speed limit and have issued 192 speeding convictions to date.

2.6 As the speed limit of 50mph is currently in place by virtue of a Temporary Road Traffic Regulation Order it was necessary to promote a new permanent Order in accordance with the Road Traffic regulation Act 1984

2.7 Plans detailing the extent of the proposed speed limit are included in Appendix 1.

3 PROCEDURES

3.1 The draft Order has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedures) (Scotland) Regulations 1999.

3.2 Consultation – the organisations, representative groups and individuals consulted during the preparation of the Order are detailed in Appendix 2. The Chief Constable has no objections to the draft Order and no objections or adverse comments were received from any of the consultees.

3.3 Publication of Proposals – the draft Order was published in the Ayrshire Classified. Full details of the proposals with plan and Statement of Reason were available for inspection at Council Headquarters, London Road, and the Roads & Transportation Division, Council Offices, Holmquarry Road, Kilmarnock.

3.4 Formal Objections – Two objections were received from,

- (i) Mr H. Sloan 23, Annick Road, Irvine KA12 0ES. As the basis of his objection , Mr Sloan claimed that the road had been designed to operate at motorway speeds; it is not a “killer road”; any problems are related to the density of traffic at peak times; any such proposals would be implemented by the Scottish Executive who he understands to be responsible for all trunk road decisions.

This objection was responded to in full and to date has not been maintained.

- (ii) Brian H. Donohoe MP, Central Ayrshire, submitted an objection on behalf of his constituents who were of the view that the 50mph speed limit “is already practically not working” and “simply not enforced” therefore they felt this “would bring the law into disrepute”. This objection was also responded to in full and on 17 May 2007 a letter from Brian H. Donohoe MP was received declaring his intention to maintain his objection

4 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The A71 dual carriageway is not a motorway. Many similar dual carriageways and motorways have 50 mph speed limits. The road had a poor accident record before the central reserve barrier and temporary 50mph speed limit were introduced. The A71 is not a trunk route. It is a local road which is the responsibility of East Ayrshire Council within the Council's boundary.

4.2 The proposed permanent 50mph speed limit will help to reduce road casualty levels on the A71 between Bellfield Interchange and Moorfield Roundabout ensuring that drivers travelling at the speed limit have adequate stopping sight distance in accordance with current design standards.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Signs for the speed limit have already been erected on site for the Temporary Speed Limit Order. The costs associated with promoting the permanent Order will be met from existing budgets.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The promotion of the Order has been in accordance with the requirements of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended and the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 1999.
- 6.2 The Committee may, having considered the objections, if they think fit cause a Hearing to be held. Hearings are held in public by an independent Reporter appointed from a list compiled by the Scottish Executive.

7 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The reduced speed limit will contribute to the Government's policies to reduce road casualties and East Ayrshire Council's policies to improve safety for all road users.

8 COMMUNITY PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The reduced speed limit will contribute to Improved Community Safety.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 It is recommended that the Council:
- (a) Agrees to determine the permanent 50mph speed limit Order for the A71 between Bellfield Interchange and Moorfield Roundabout without a Hearing;
 - (b) considers the objections set out in paragraph 3.4 above; and
 - (c) approves the proposals for 50mph speed limits on the A71 between Bellfield Interchange and Moorfield Roundabout, Kilmarnock, as shown in Appendix 1.

William Stafford
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

24 May 2007
JDD

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Plans showing the extent of the proposed speed limits.

Appendix 2 – Consultation list.

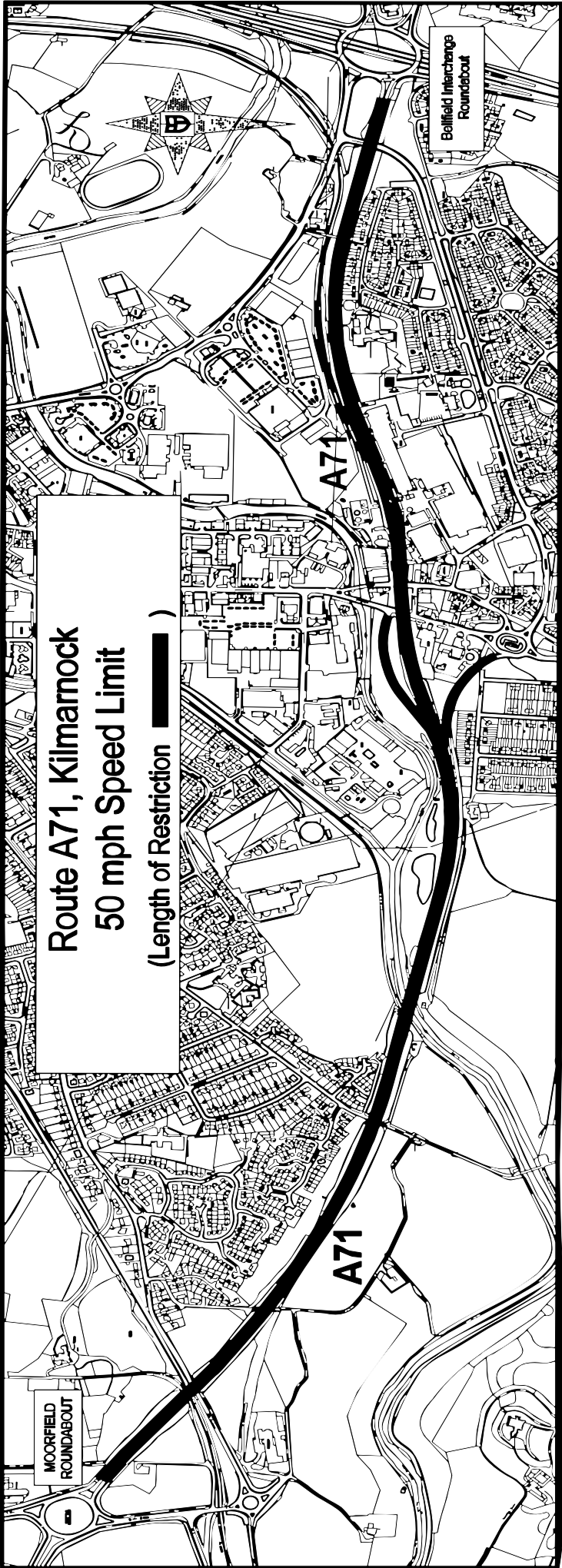
BACKGROUND PAPERS

1 The East Ayrshire Council (Route A71 Bellfield Interchange Roundabout to Moorfield Roundabout, Kilmarnock) (50mph Speed limit) Order _____

Copies of the above named draft Order are available from the Head of Roads & Transportation.

For further information on the contents of this report please contact Jacqueline Davidson on 01563 576310.

Implementing Officer: Jacqueline Davidson



Appendix 2

Consultation List

The following organisations, representative groups and individuals were consulted during the preparation of the draft Orders –

Strathclyde Police
Strathclyde Fire Brigade
Ayrshire & Arran Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
Ayrshire & Arran Primary Care NHS Trust
Scottish Ambulance Service
Strathclyde Passenger Transport
Freight Transport Association Ltd
The Road Haulage Association Ltd
Stagecoach Western Buses & A1 Service
Rowe's Coaches
Shuttlebuses
Smith's Coaches
Marbill Coaches
Liddel's Coaches
Keenan of Ayr Coach Travel
MacEwan's Coach Service
Royal Mail
Scottish Power
Transco
British Telecom
Scottish Water
Royal Automobile Club
The Automobile Association Ltd
Cycling Scotland
C.T.C
Scottish Taxi Federation
East Ayrshire Taxi Trades Council
East Ayrshire Forum on Disability
North East Ayrshire Access Panel
Bellfield Community Council
Grange/Howard Community Council
Chair, Development Services Committee
Councillor I Linto
Councillor J. Campbell
Councillor R. Murray
Councillor J. Knapp
Chair, Kilmarnock South Local Committee
Chair, Kilmarnock Central Local Committee
Chief Executive, East Ayrshire Council
Executive Director of Development Services
Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services
Executive Director of Corporate Support
Executive Director of Education & Social Services
Chief Engineer (Operations)
Head of Planning and Building Control