

Old Worcester Road, Hartlebury: Traffic speeds and HGVs.

Report and recommendations presented to the Parish Council on behalf of Worcestershire Highways by Kieran Hemstock:

The speed and class data for Old Worcester Road, Hartlebury has now been collected and analysed.

Data was taken between the 18th & 24th July.

Summarised data is below, together with comments and recommendations.

SPEED DATA:

Location/Direction	Mean Speed	85 th Percentile Speed*
South of Inn Lane - Northbound	34mph	41.2mph
South of Inn Lane - Southbound	32.8mph	38.7mph
North of Inn Lane - Northbound	35.4mph	41.8mph
North of Inn Lane - Southbound	35.1mph	41.2mph

* The 85th percentile speed is a speed at which 85% of traffic will be travelling at, or below.

CLASS DATA (Average Daily Volume):

Vehicle Class	South Site - Northbound	South Site - Southbound	North Site - Northbound	North Site - Southbound
Pedal cycles/Motor cycles	3	12	9	15
Cars	691	699	750	774
Cars with trailer	5	6	7	6
Light Goods Vehicles	56	63	85	74
3 axle truck or bus	1	2	2	2
4 axle truck	18	22	2	8
3 axle articulated	0	1	0	1
4 axle articulated	1	3	3	2
5 axle articulated	1	5	6	2
6 axle articulated	6	2	2	8
Double trailer	0	0	0	0
Double or triple road train	0	0	0	0
Total	782	815	866	892

An accident check for Old Worcester Road has also been run and for the period 1/7/15 to 30/6/18 there was 1 recorded personal injury accident. This was in November 2015 and was a minor shunt type accident at the Southern end of Old Worcester Road during foggy conditions.

In addition, I have driven the road to evaluate existing traffic management measures.

SUMMARY

Speed limits should be evidence-led and self-explaining, and seek to reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel and encourage self-compliance.

The key factors that are taken into account in any decisions on local speed limits are:

- history of collisions;
- road geometry and engineering;
- road function;
- Composition of road users (including existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users);
- existing traffic speeds; and
- road environment.

A study of types of crashes, their severity, causes and frequency, together with a survey of traffic speeds, should indicate whether an existing speed limit is appropriate for the type of road and mix of use by different groups of road users.

The most recently recorded mean speeds for the area were between 32.8mph and 35.4mph.

In general, we would be looking for mean speeds to be at, or below, 30mph in a 30 limit. However, each site is different and mean speeds above 30mph do not automatically mean the road is inherently dangerous.

The speed motorists adopt are largely governed by the prevailing environment and character of the road. Where there is concentrated frontage development, high levels of pedestrians/cyclists and the road geometry lends itself to lower speeds, then motorists will drive slower. Where there is less development, less activity etc. then speeds are usually higher.

Having driven the route, there are long stretches of Old Worcester Road which are undeveloped, bounded by fields or hedges etc.

Equally, apart from activity associated with the shop/Post Office, the further out you go there is less activity than you would associate with a typical 30mph speed limit.

Taking this into consideration, I am not surprised by the speed survey results.

Of equal note is the accident record, which shows no patterns of speed related accidents.

With regard to HGV movements, anything falling in, or between, the categories '3 axle truck or bus' and 'double or triple road train' in the table above would be classed as a heavy goods vehicle (7.5 Tonne+).

At the South site HGVs accounted for 3.88% of total traffic.

At the North site HGVs accounted for 2.16% of total traffic.

For comparison, nationally, a road of this nature would carry on average 1.5% HGV traffic.

Whilst a figure of 5% or more would indicate a potential 'rat running' issue, as opposed to movements connected with the local area.

The results tend to reinforce what I think we expected in terms of the volumes of HGVs and the tendency for the A449 'South' junction to be more frequently used.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Reinforce the 30mph speed limit. Options include:

Re-mark white 30mph terminal point gateways – Action for: Kieran Hemstock

Consider feasibility of white gates – Action for: Parish Council to speak with Gerry Brienza

Fix/Replace broken VAS and consider rotation between either end of the road – Action for Parish Council in liaison with Gerry Brienza

Provide 30mph repeater roundel markings to supplement 30 repeater signs (Example below) – Action for: Kieran Hemstock subject to 3rd party funding

Thicken hazard centre line on both approaches to the shop area where there is an increase in pedestrian/vehicle movements – Action for: Kieran Hemstock

Take advice from the Safer Roads Partnership regarding speed enforcement/Community Speed Watch – Action for Parish Council

HGVs:

Options to reduce HGV numbers are limited as they are servicing local premises by the most appropriate/legitimate route. In which case it is a matter of trying to manage driver behaviour which links back to the recommendations regarding reinforcement of the 30mph speed limit.

