

## **Pitchcombe Parish Council**

### **Case to reduce speed limit on A46/A4173**

#### **Introduction**

GCC Highways at the request of Pitchcombe Parish Council have undertaken numerous studies over the past 4 years to improve road safety at Pitchcombe junction and A46 and A4173 within the Parish boundaries. These studies include the following:

1. A46/A4173 Pitchcombe Junction Improvement Feasibility Study (Report 5044104/238/001) dated November 2006. This study considered following schemes “do minimum”, “ghost island”, “roundabout”, and “traffic lights”, the study recommended that traffic lights should be installed at the junction.
2. A46/A4173 Pitchcombe Junction installation of Traffic Signals, Ref SD25238 dated 5<sup>th</sup> January 2009. Detailed design for traffic lights at Pitchcombe junction was undertaken, this study recommended that the speed limit should be reduced and the junction should be re-designed.
3. Technical Note - Development of Design Proposals Provided by Gloucestershire Highways, dated June 2009. A study has been undertaken to consider alternative layouts for the junction including removal of carriageway road surface to improve forward visibility on A46 southbound. No conclusive or cost effective solution could be found other than to reduce the speed from 50mph to 40mph and to undertake road surface and signage improvements.

The Department for Transport circular 01/2006 dated 8<sup>th</sup> August 2006 provides guidelines for the “setting of local speed limits”.

Section 1 – Introduction defines the key points of this circular as follows-

- Speed limits should be evidence-led, self-explaining and seek to reinforce people’s assessment of what is a safe speed to travel. They should encourage self-compliance and not be seen by drivers as being a target speed at which to drive in all circumstances.
- Traffic authorities set ‘local speed limits’ in situations where local needs and considerations deem it desirable for drivers to adopt a speed which is different from the national speed limit. Local speed limits could be reduced or increased, depending upon the conditions and evidence.
- This guidance is to be used for setting all local speed limits on single and dual carriageway roads in both urban and rural areas.
- This guidance should also be used as the basis for future assessments of local speed limits, for developing route management strategies and for developing the speed management strategies required as part of the Local Transport Plan process.
- Traffic authorities are asked to review the speed limits on all of their A and B roads, and implement any necessary changes, by 2011 in accordance with this guidance.

Section 2 – Provides background and objectives of the circular as follows-

- Traffic authorities continue to have the flexibility to set local speed limits that are right for the individual road, reflecting local needs and taking account of all local considerations.
- Local speed limits should not be set in isolation, but as part of a package with other measures to manage vehicle speeds.

### **Case for speed limit reduction from 50mph to 40mph**

As a result of the above studies it is evident that Pitchcombe junction does not meet current road safety design standards and regulations, nor would any of the proposed junction re-layout schemes meet said design safety criteria. This scenario at the junction combined with the numerous dangerous bends with limited line of sight on various sections of the A46 between Painswick to Rock Mill Stroud and A4173 between Edge and Stroud passing through the Parish of Pitchcombe presents a strong case to reduce the speed limit from 50mph to 40mph.

The majority of the Pitchcombe Parishioners reside in properties in lanes located off the A46 and A4173, i.e. Wades Lane, Halfway Pitch, Pitchcombe, Wragg Castle Lane, Pincot Lane, the Old Gloucester Road. As can be seen from the attached photographs poor line of sight on exiting/entering these lanes onto the A46 or A4173 against traffic travelling at speeds of 45mph to 50mph creates a very dangerous manoeuvre given that the Highway Code stopping distance for vehicles travelling at 50mph is 53 metres.

Recently introduced reductions in speed limits on the A4173 at Brookthorpe and Whaddon, and Edge combined with varying speed limits at Painswick and Rock Mill provides a confusing variation in speed limits over a very short distance, i.e.

A4173 - 30mph at Brookthorpe and Whaddon,  
50mph for 1 mile to Edge,  
40mph through Edge,  
50mph for 1.2 miles to Pitchcombe junction.

A46 - 30mph at Painswick,  
50 mph for 1.2 miles to Pitchcombe Junction  
50mph for 0.7 miles to Rock Mill  
40mph Rock Mill to Stroud

Pitchcombe Parish Council acknowledges that recent traffic speed surveys undertaken at locations around Pitchcombe junction and Edge report that the mean speeds are within the appropriate range for the posted speed limit. However these speed limits were posted by Department of Transport some time ago and recognition should now be given to the speed limit changes implemented over the past years at the locations identified above and the much increased volume of traffic movements on these two roads. Therefore consideration should be given in accordance with the DfT Circular 01/2006 to implement 40mph speed limit from Edge to Pitchcombe on the A4173 and 40mph speed limit introduced from Painswick to Stroud on the A46; this will provide a safer and lower cost solution to improve road safety in and around the Parish.

A further rationale for reducing the speed limit on the A4173 and A46 at Pitchcombe junction is the poor visibility at junction due to brow of hill south of the A46 towards Stroud. The recent Development report (ref document No 3 above) states "the existing k value at the junction is 5 whereas design standard TD9/93 states that for this design speed (50mph) the minimum crest k should be 55". This statement supports a significant reduction in the speed limit!

### **Record of GCC "recorded accidents"**

Please find below road accident data provided by GCC Highways. These are the formally reported incidents that required Emergency Services and do not reflect the many "unrecorded" number of incidents in the area.

**Photograph presentation of road hazards**

Please find attached slide presentation of hazardous road conditions in and around the Parish of Pitchcombe. These photographs were taken on a quiet weekend and from a driver's viewpoint in most circumstances.





5

46 Painswick -  
almon Springs

ॐ

A4173 Pitchcombe  
to Edge

**Data Range:**

2006-2009

3

ENV GENERAL-ACCIDENTS

ACC\_SEVERITY

^ Fatal

✓ Serious

\* Slight

- o Damage

## Accident Plan

Drawn by: JN

**Team:**

## Evaluation

**Scale:** 1:19,027

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Road Safety





