



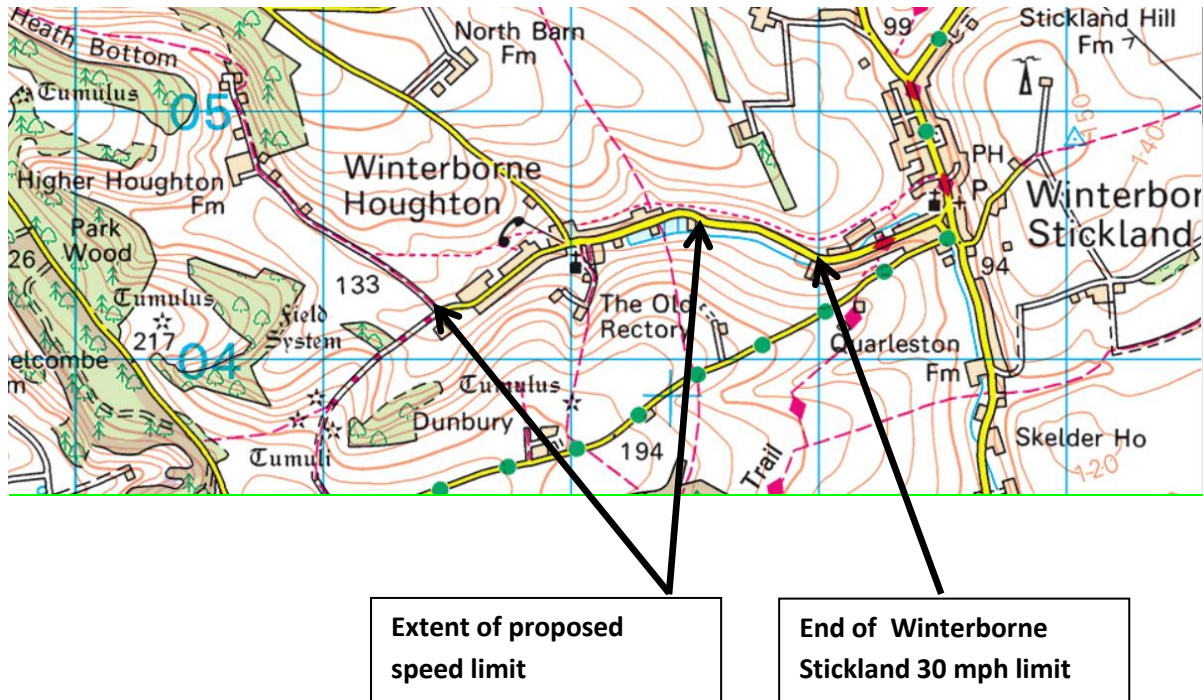
Winterborne Houghton Parish Council Application for a Village Speed Limit



Winterborne Houghton

Application for a Village Speed Limit

The purpose of this document is to request Dorset District Council to implement a speed limit of 20 or 30 mph within the residential limits of Winterborne Houghton.



The Village: Winterborne Houghton is a linear village situated at the head of the river Winterborne. The Winterborne flows along the southern edge of the main street which is narrow, single track in many places and there are no pavements. The village consists of 87 homes of which 58 front on to the village street. The population is made up of just under 200 residents and covers all age groups from about 20 school age children to elderly pensioners. The village has no speed restrictions except for the national speed limit of 60 mph

The main approach is from the neighbouring village of Winterborne Stickland (30 mph) via West Street then along Water Lane which is derestricted. Water Lane is a winding single track road running beside the stream. Care is required as visibility is poor and it is not uncommon for vehicles to end up in the Winterborne

The entrance to the village is on a sharp bend following a short straight section of Water Lane and the temptation is to speed up and there have been two serious accidents along this stretch in recent years. One required the air ambulance to be called out and the other was a collision between an oil tanker and a motor car, where the latter was written off. Both these incidents can be

attributed to excessive speed. There are regular close encounters between vehicles attempting to enter or leave the village and travelling too fast.



Water Lane - looking towards W Houghton.
Traffic tends to speed up along this section after leaving W. Stickland



Entrance to the village -Two major accidents here and regular 'near misses' caused by traffic travelling too fast

The village street is approximately 1150 metres in length with housing on either side, some with gardens to the front and others which immediately front the road. As previously mentioned, there are no pavements. The average width of the road is 3 metres and access can be further restricted by parked vehicles.



Parked vehicles, deliveries plus tractors and trailers of farm vehicles do reduce traffic speed. However frustrated drivers on tight schedules often drive at unrealistic speeds to make up lost time once the road is clear

At the end of the village street the public road becomes an estate road leading to Higher Houghton which is part of the parish of Winterborne Houghton. Higher Houghton consists of seven homes, a farm with associated businesses, such as timber extraction, and a thriving equestrian centre.

Why is a speed limit necessary? At the Annual Village Meeting in May 2014 two main concerns were raised by the residents.

- Increase in traffic accessing the village
- Excessive speeding through the village

The Parish Council were requested to investigate both these points and see what action could be taken.

There has been a significant increase in traffic during the past few years. The parish council concluded that although this has reduced the quality of life within the village it is a fact of life that may have to be accepted.

However, it was agreed that vehicles speeding through the village were a cause for concern and the problem could be managed by the introduction of a speed limit. **The 'natural mean average speed' through the village is around 25 mph and it must be stressed that the majority of the drivers drive sensibly and considerately but there are a significant number that drive at totally inappropriate and unsafe speeds**

A study has shown that speeding vehicles fall into the following main categories:

1. Due to change in life styles many more families have more than one car and these are used for commuting besides social purposes. Commuters tend to work to very tight time scales
2. Increase in internet shopping has resulted in many delivery vans visiting the village each day as compared to when Royal Mail had the monopoly. Also the major supermarkets make regular grocery deliveries. These drivers work to tight schedules and have to make up lost time and road safety doesn't always come first.
3. The continued success of the equestrian centre at Higher Houghton has caused significantly more traffic movements each day. Not only do staff and clients visit daily there are a significant number of people with horses in 'do it yourself' livery who visit twice a day.

In summary the excessive speeding is mainly the result of people visiting and passing through the village with tight work schedules and trying to fit livery duties into a busy day

Village Consultation: The parish council decided to ask every household in the parish for their views and whether they would they wish to see a 20 mph speed limit introduced. The overwhelming majority, 90%, supported a speed limit. Whilst almost everyone would support the proposed first choice of a 20 mph limit, a few households questioned, whilst they would not support 20mph, would support a 30 mph limit. The view of almost everyone was that any speed limit (20 or 30) was a vast improvement on the current situation. The majority of residents would also support the formation of a local 'Speed Watch Group' and several have volunteered to take part.

All those surveyed, including some who visited Winterborne Houghton frequently, were invited to sign a petition asking DDC to introduce a 20 mph speed limit. The petition will be presented to DDC in 2016

Following the overwhelming support by residents for a speed limit the Parish Council considered the following points which form part of National and Local Guidelines to be used in considering and setting speed limits.

Points for consideration: The Department for Transport's guidelines on setting local speed limits states:

Fear of traffic can affect people's quality of life in villages and it is self-evident that villages should have comparable speed limits to similar roads in urban areas. It is therefore government policy that, where appropriate, a 30 mph speed limit should be the norm in villages.

WINTERBORNE HOUGHTON IS 60MPH!

Both Dorset County Council and National Guidelines state:

Ensuring that the needs of vulnerable road users, people on foot, those with prams or wheel chairs, on bicycles or on horseback are fully taken into account.

WINTERBORNE HOUGHTON IN ADDITION HAS CHILDREN PLAYING AND PEOPLE WORKING IN THE STREET

The following photographs illustrate some of the vulnerable road users



'Men at Work!'



'Local Horse Riders'



'Local Cyclists'



'Some with 4 wheels - some with 4 paws'

In conclusion the Winterborne Houghton Parish Council, on behalf of the village residents, request Dorset District Council to implement a 20 or 30mph speed limit throughout the residential area. What is beyond all shadow of a doubt is that Winterborne Houghton is in desperate need of a speed limit. Although not directly part of the consultation, consideration should also be given, as possibly a better alternative, to extending the 30 mph limit from the end of West Street in Winterborne Stickland to terminate at the end of Winterborne Houghton. This may well be the simplest and cheapest option and would be very acceptable to the residents.