



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Environment, Regeneration & Streetscene Services Cabinet Board

20th January 2023

Report of the Head of Engineering & Transport – D.W.Griffiths

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: Margam and Tai-bach, Port Talbot

**A48 MARGAM ROAD TO PORT TALBOT (REVOCATION)
AND (30MPH SPEED LIMITS) - ORDER 2022**

Purpose of the Report:

To consider the comments and objections received following for the advertisement of the A48 Margam Road to Port Talbot (Revocation) and (30mph Speed Limits) - Order 2022, as indicated in Appendix A.

Executive Summary:

The report outlines the proposed 30mph Speed Limit Traffic Regulation Orders which were formally advertised resulting in objections being received.

Background:

The Welsh Government are proposing to implement a national roll out of a revision to the current default speed limit of 30 mph.

The new default speed limit in lit areas across Wales will be 20 mph not 30 mph as currently. This is planned to happen in September 2023 when the new default limits become operational.

Local Authorities are able to convert back from the default of 20 mph speed limit to the current 30 mph speed limit on agreed strategic roads by creating a traffic regulation order.

The proposed 30mph speed limit traffic regulation order has been agreed with the Welsh Government and the local members as an exception to the general default 20 mph speed limit as indicated in Appendix A.

The traffic regulation order is necessary to maintain the existing speed limit of 30 mph on sections of A48 Margam Road, A48 Commercial Road, A48 Talbot Road, A48 Heilbronn Way, Dyffryn Road and Abbey Road within the borough after the Welsh Government has passed legislation to implement a 20mph default speed limit in urban areas nationally throughout Wales in the interest of road safety.

The Council as Local Highway Authority considers that these roads are strategic routes with higher volumes of daily traffic compared to urban residential streets and as such does not meet the criteria or the nature of a road or roads with a speed limit of 20 mph.

The Council considers that the existing 30 mph speed limits are appropriate speed limits in order to maintain a reasonable traffic flow on higher traffic volume strategic routes.

Financial Impacts:

The scheme is to be funded by the Welsh Government.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016.

The first stage assessment, attached at Appendix B, has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A summary is included below: -

A full impact assessment is not required as the proposed traffic regulation orders will provide a safe environment for all highway users.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

There are 'No Implications' associated with this report.

Workforce Impacts:

There are 'No Implications' associated with this report.

Legal Impacts:

The proposals were advertised for a 21-day period between 26th September 2022 and 17th October 2022.

Risk Management Impacts:

There are no risk management impacts associated with this report.

Consultation:

This item has been subject to external consultation.

A consultation exercise was undertaken for a period of 21 days between 26th September 2022 and 17th October 2022.

There were 500 letters and plans hand delivered to the properties on A48 Margam Road, A48 Commercial Road, A48 Talbot Road, A48 Heilbronn Way, Dyffryn Road and Abbey Road detailing the proposals. Following a three-week consultation exercise, 1 support and 3 objections were received.

A summary of the objections and support received are given below:-

Support: - *Any officer observations/ comments are illustrated in italics in response to the points raised.*

- a) A resident supports the proposal as there is enough congestion as it is on the route, especially at peak times and diversions from the M4. When the Plaza re-opens that will attract more traffic.
- b) A resident doesn't want traffic backing up onto Junction 40 of the motorway. The resident feels that drivers drive according to road conditions and when vehicles travel down Abbey Road to the traffic lights they will not do 20mph.

Objection: - *Any officer observations/ comments are illustrated in italics in response to the points raised.*

- a) Residents are against this proposal due to the already excessive speeds along the route.
- b) Residents have stated that they regularly observe vehicles travelling up to 60 mph along this route. Speeding is the main cause of collisions along this road.

Whilst the council acknowledges that speeding may occur along this route, the enforcement of any speed limit is the responsibility of South Wales Police.

- c) A resident disagrees with the reasoning that lowering the speed limit is to maintain traffic flow as traffic will flow at whatever speed is in operation.

The A48 is a major highway, however if a lower speed limit was in place then traffic could divert into the side streets to avoid any enforcement by South Wales Police creating rat running through narrow residential streets.

- d) A resident has stated that 20 mph is a lot safer and less polluting.
- e) A resident feels that the speed limit is being kept at 30mph to allow buses to be kept running on time.

The Council notes that the speed limit is being kept at 30mph due to the nature and conditions of the existing A classified road and not to allow for the running time of buses.

- f) Residents feel that the installation of a speed camera or any such measure by the council would be a more appropriate solution to deter speeding vehicles and reduce accidents.

The Council will continue to monitor the situation going forward and may consider additional mitigation measures if required.

- g) A resident feels that there is no traffic control to slow vehicles at all and they never seen either fixed or mobile speed detection on this stretch of road.

h) A resident is formally against reducing the speed to 20mph.

The local members have been consulted on the feedback received and support that the objections be overruled with the scheme being implemented as advertised in Appendix A.

Recommendations:

Having had due regard to the integrated impact assessment it is recommended that the objections are overruled to the A48 Margam Road to Port Talbot (Revocation) and (30mph Speed Limits) - Order 2022 (as detailed in Appendix A to the circulated report) and that the scheme is implemented as advertised.

The objectors are to be informed of the decision accordingly.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The Orders are necessary to maintain the existing speed limit of 30 mph on sections of A48 Margam Road, A48 Commercial Road, A48 Talbot Road, A48 Heilbronn Way, Dyffryn Road and Abbey Road within the borough after the Welsh Government has passed legislation to implement a 20mph default speed limit in urban areas nationally throughout Wales in the interest of road safety.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Plan – Proposed 30mph Speed Limit, A48 Port Talbot to Margam – Legal Plan.

Appendix B – Integrated Impact Assessment.

List of Background Papers:

None.

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