

## **B1456 – WOOLVERSTONE TO CHELMONDISTON PROPOSED 40MPH SPEED LIMIT**

Response from Woolverstone Parish Council – Unanimously agreed 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Woolverstone PC have been trying to secure a lower speed limit on B1456 between Woolverstone and Chelmondiston for many years. The formal process started in 2017. Seven outlying houses are within Woolverstone village but are not protected by the Suffolk wide “*comprehensive 30 mph limits in the villages*” introduced in the 1990s and are not protected by the “*principle of 30 mph limits*”. There is no comparable village, on a major road, on the Shotley Peninsula that has a group of outlying houses like ours.

1.2 There is no footpath in this section of the village.

1.3 Pulling out of driveways is potentially hazardous because of the nature of the road, the poor visibility and the speed of some of the traffic.

1.4 There is also an issue of traffic failing to slow adequately on leaving the current National speed limit area and entering Woolverstone 30mph zone.

1.5 Due to extensive development in Chelmondiston and Shotley, we expect the number of vehicles using the B1456 between Woolverstone and Chelmondiston to increase by over 1000 as these developments are built out. The number of vehicle trips would, therefore, be even higher than currently.

1.6 SCC Cllr. Simon Harley, and before that SCC Cllr David Wood have supported our requests to lower the speed limit between Woolverstone and Chelmondiston.

### **2. Context**

2.1 The B1456 is a winding, uneven RURAL road running the length of the Shotley Peninsula. The majority of B1456 from Freston to Shotley is either 30 or 40 mph due to running through the village 30mph zones (Woolverstone, Chelmondiston, Shotley) or having a history of accidents. There has recently been agreement to lower the speed limit to 40mph through Freston crossroads from Woolverstone. This leaves one stretch of

approximately 1.17kms (.727 mile) from Chelmondiston to Woolverstone at the National speed limit of 60 mph out of the entirety of the B1456 from Freston Lodge to Shotley Gate, of just under 7 miles. In our view, this short section of road encourages rapid acceleration, overtaking and dangerous driving.

2.2 This 1.17 km stretch of road is an anomaly along the B1456 whereas other stretches of the road encourage smooth driving.

2.3 The seven houses which belong to Woolverstone village lie outside the village 30mph zone. There is a gap between these houses and the rest of the village of just 200m (.125 mile). There is no footpath connecting these houses to the rest of the village. They are effectively cut off. The houses occur at a winding section of the road – the “Woolverstone Wobbles” - where visibility is poor and there are blind spots.

2.4 There is no other place on the Shotley Peninsula, or slightly wider afield e.g. in Bentley or Brantham, where a group of houses that are in close connection to a village are outside the 30mph village zone. In fact, in Bentley, Brantham, Holbrook, Stutton and Shotley there are longer gaps between houses that are within the 30mph limit. i.e. more than 200m to connect outlying houses on similar busy main roads. For example:

- Holbrook “The Drift” to Stutton turning to Alton Water = 369m beside open field.
- Bentley. Cottages by Railway line to first houses in settlement at top of hill = 386m beside open field.
- Last house Brantham railway bridge to Church Lane = 400m beside open fields and with one minor junction

2.5 This noticeably short stretch of road at the National speed limit occurs after four miles of 30mph and 40 mph from Shotley Gate to Chelmondiston followed by 30 mph through Chelmondiston village. Many vehicles see this as an opportunity to overtake cars travelling slower than they would like, even overtaking through the bends where visibility is extremely poor. This makes it particularly hazardous for pulling out of the houses at this point by car and also for crossing the road on foot and cycling, which means the level of severance for the people who live in these houses is at the high end of severe. Parishioners report

elevated levels of fear and anxiety at any of these manoeuvres. There has been a proliferation of mirrors on the northern side of road to aid visibility of oncoming traffic.

2.6 The residents of this part of Woolverstone do not receive the "In Touch" magazine because the delivery driver has been told not to stop here because the road is too dangerous due to the speed of traffic and the anxiety of stopping on the carriageway.

2.7 SCC have now had SLOW markings painted on the carriageway in two places so are aware of the issue.

2.8 Furthermore, traffic entering the current Woolverstone 30mph zone is not slowing from National speed limit zone quickly, which also leads to speeding within Woolverstone.

### **3. Road - B1456 Woolverstone to Chelmondiston**

3.1 Woolverstone PC does not recognise the characterisation of the B1456 in the traffic report. The screen shots chosen from Google maps do not show the true nature of the bends. Neither does the map itself at the chosen scale.





3.2 The bends at the Chelmondiston end of this stretch of road are not mentioned in the report at all, despite giving rise to a number of recent accidents.



3.3 Attempts at widening the road in the past has led to drain covers being away from the verge and are hazardous for cyclists who move out to avoid them.



3.4 There are blind spots within the bends.



3.5 There are three junctions within this stretch of road. Berners Lane (leading to three more Woolverstone houses) and Richardsons Lane to the north and Bylam Lane (leading to Holbrook and Harkstead) to the south. This latter is increasingly used as a short cut from Manningtree to the B1456. The Berners Lane junction is completely blind to traffic coming from Ipswich. A driver has to wind down the window and listen for traffic while negotiating traffic coming in the other direction at speed.



3.6 B1456 is crossed by Suffolk Cycle Route B Richardsons Lane to Bylam lane.

3.7 The road is bounded by high hedges and trees for the majority of its length further decreasing visibility.

3.8 There is no pavement or footpath alongside the road although there is one inside the hedge on the northern side of the road. There are only two official entrances to the footpath: one near the Ipswich High School boundary and the other on to Berners Lane. There is another footpath to the south, between No 33 and the BT substation. While there is reasonable visibility towards the western end crossing the road requires considerable concentration due to the speed of the traffic making it especially hazardous for those with children, dogs or the elderly.

3.9 The road has recently had the words SLOW painted on it in two places following repeated minor accidents. This recognises that there is a need to drive cautiously.



3.10 There are large fallow deer herds, over 60 head, in the nearby woods (Kennel Wood, Bylam Wood and Glebe Wood) and they cross the road. Weighing in at between 50 and 90 kgs a deer can cause damage to vehicles and usually end in death for the deer. Also, muntjac deer live in the area. There are no deer warning signs



3.11 Accidents with deer occur regularly along this section of the B1456. See below for most recent. A further hazard is the action taken by drivers, braking and swerving, to avoid collision with a deer.

3.12 Parking outside the houses for deliveries is hazardous, both for other road users and the driver of the parked vehicle. The “In Touch” local news magazine is no longer delivered to these houses because of the danger posed to the delivery driver. This demonstrates further severance for the residents of these seven houses and being part of a community.

3.13 Nothing is said in the report about the bends at the Chelmondiston end of the road.



3.14 There have been a series of accidents here over the last year. The bends are tight and blind in places yet vehicles leave the 30mph of Chelmondiston and many accelerate sharply. The reverse happens to traffic coming from a westerly direction failing to slow coming into the village. Walnut Tree farm have erected their own “crash barrier” to try to protect their building, not always successfully.





Note the homemade crash barrier constructed of sleepers following three collisions with the outhouse wall.



Light coloured bricks show where previous collision part demolished the wall.

3.14 The road surface is uneven and drainage is poor leading to a lot of surface water after heavy rain.

#### **4. Road Users**

4.1 The B1456 through this stretch currently sees approximately 6000 vehicle trips a day. Developments already given planning permission in Chelmondiston and Shotley will see this number increase by a further 2000 trips to around 8,000 trips a day.

4.2 Shotley is an “unsustainable” location to build houses. This means that most residents will need to leave Shotley for shopping, education, entertainment and onward travel. Traffic on the B1456 is set to increase by 30%. There will be an increase in delivery traffic servicing this expanding village. At the same time there also is a determined effort to increase tourism on the Shotley Peninsula, especially to Shotley. This will place even more pressure on the houses in the National speed limit between Woolverstone and Chelmondiston.

4.3 There is a signed cycle route crossing the B1456 between Richardsons Lane and Bylam Lane. SOUTH SUFFOLK Route B – Part of the Pin Mill to Alton Water route.



4.4 Both leisure and club cyclists use the road throughout the year. One thing that mitigates against increased cycle travel from Woolverstone to Chelmondiston is being overtaken on a narrow windy, road by traffic by vehicles travelling fast and, with little room for overtaking, space given to cyclists can be minimal, sometimes inches. Few vehicles adhere to the new Highway Code requirement of 1.5 m for passing cyclist.

4.5 The rural nature of the road means there is a constant use of the road by agricultural traffic, both farm vehicles and contractor vehicles. Sugar beet is now collected from alongside this road from great heaps that run for a hundred metres, or more, and loaded into stationary, 44 tonne lorries. The harvest season has extended. This year sugar beet was collected from November to February. The same lorries collect grain, onions, potatoes and parsley as part of the industrialisation of farming. These harvests now cover a greater part of the year. Increasing use of “digestate” both on fields and in storage have sharply increased the number of large tankers.

4.6 The report shows a complete lack of understanding of developments on the Shotley Peninsula. The former HMS Ganges site, Barrelman’s Point, is now expected to have 303 dwellings. To this should be added the Shotley Marina development a further 150 houses and 24 houses at Chelmondiston giving a total of 477 additional houses. There have been further applications in Shotley in 2023 (48 + 18 + 6 = 72} giving a potential increase of 549. And there will be more. As there is a limited bus service it is assumed that nearly all new residents will be car dependent. It will take at least 5 more years to complete building.

## **5. Traffic Survey**

5.1 The traffic survey shows a mean speed of 40 mph (South) or 38 mph (North). This would suggest there would be a high likelihood that there would be general compliance with a reduced speed limit of 40mph.

5.2 However, we were not given sight of the full data field for the survey period. We did note that 0.6% of traffic during the period surveyed exceeded the national speed limit of 60 mph.

5.3 We were disappointed that the requested further speed survey within the Woolverstone 30 mph zone were not carried out as agreed (see email chain in Appendix) and receive no mention in the report that a 40mph zone would slow traffic coming onto the 30mph zone rather than relying on the sharp bend outside Spring Lodge.

5.5 The Suffolk Speed Limit Policy at paragraph 20 allows the use of intermediate 40mph limits on the approach to 30mph village limits where there are outlying houses or high approach speeds. The purpose of these is to help compliance with the 30mph limit. The policy

does not specify any appropriate length as this would be a matter for local circumstances but generally these limits would be limited in length as they would be an introduction to the 30mph limit.

5.6 In our view, a reduced speed limit might encourage drivers to take the bends at both ends at a slower speed and therefore reduce the potential for accidents. There is no reference to this, despite concerns being expressed throughout the protracted process at every level since 2018.

5.7 Also of interest is the lack of consistency in using the data compared with the report on the “B1456 – FRESTON TO WOOLVERSTONE PROPOSED 40MPH SPEED LIMIT” where the mean speed is used to show compliance with the proposed limit. There is no reference to the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile. Whereas in the “B1456 – WOOLVERSTONE TO CHELMONDISTON PROPOSED 40MPH SPEED LIMIT” the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile is used to claim there would not be compliance, even though the mean speed is actually lower than that at Freston. This discrepancy in method should be accounted for.

5.7 Woolverstone Parish Council note that SCC Highways agree that there is “*restricted forward visibility*” along the stretch of road where the speed survey was carried out which slows the traffic down. This seems incompatible with the claim later in the report where the authors claim there is “*reasonable visibility along the route*”.

## **6 . Collision data**

6.1 Data received from the Suffolk Constabulary on road traffic collisions that:

- Occurred in Suffolk
- Occurred on a highway
- Involve injury
- Were reported to the police

Information on damage only collisions and those not reported to the police are not included.

6.2 A 2022 study by NFU Mutual found that in the East of England, there were 282% more fatalities on rural compared to urban roads in 2021. Nationally countryside roads are 70% more dangerous despite seeing 35% less traffic.

6.3 The SCC Highways “B1456 – WOOLVERSTONE TO CHELMONDISTON PROPOSED 40MPH SPEED LIMIT” report states that there were four reported collisions between 2018 and 2022. One slight injury accident and three serious injury accidents. Collisions in 2023 are not included.

6.4 The report notes that one accident involved a “stolen car and under the influence of alcohol at the time” implying that the incident was not caused by speed or the nature of the road.

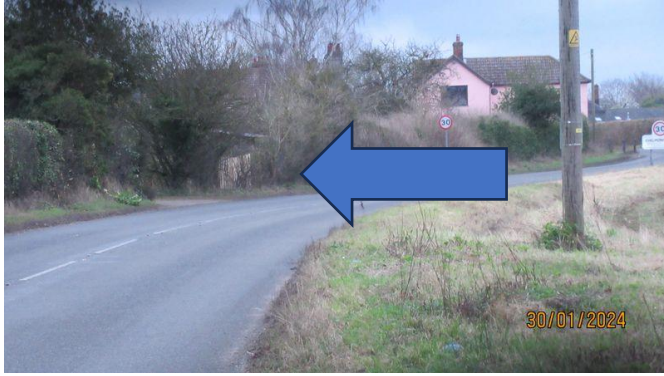
6.5 The reality of the B1456 along this stretch of road is that there are numerous accidents that are not reported and therefore do not appear in the data. Or, do not involve injury to persons.

6.6 Below is a list of accidents that didn't make TRAFFMAP:

- 26.01.24 – Suzuki in collision with light goods vehicle at the junction of Glebe Lane and B1456. Woolverstone. Side impact.



- 22.01.24 – vehicle left road and crashed through fence after the bends and just before 30 mph sign, Chelmondiston. Third such accident.



- 12.11.23 - 9pm. Walnut Tree farm. Car span on bend heading towards Shotley. Collided in a head in manner with car travelling towards Ipswich. Police attended



- 21.10.23 - 2pm. Walnut tree Farm. Car span on bend travelling at high speed. Exited road destroying 25 yards of fencing and demolishing barn. Police attended. £33,000 of damage to property



- 02.06.23 – 1 pm. Collision at junction of Bylam lane with B1456.
- 01.06.23 – Approx. 7 pm. Two vehicle collision at junction of Bylam Lane and B1456. Both drivers requiring medical assistance road side. RTA 332
- 07.04.23 – Cyclist overtaken when turning right into No 33, Main Road.
- 23.06.22 - 8 p.m. Walnut Tree Farm. Car travelling towards Shotley span on bend. Destroyed 2 fence posts and damaged drain down pipe. Police did not attend. Damaged repaired by driver's father.
- 07.05.22 – Car ended up in ditch opposite school entrance. Removed by transporter.



- 04.01.22 - 1 a.m. Walnut Tree Farm. Car travelling towards Shotley span on bend impacting barn and knocking car sized hole in barn wall. Police attended. £12000 damage to property.
- 26.01.21 – Outside No 34 and 34 main road, Woolverstone. Black BMW travelling at speed through Woolverstone bends forced blue car travelling in the opposite direction off the road and onto the verge. BMW didn't stop. Occupants of the blue car shaken.
- 17.09.19 – approx. 1.00 p.m. Car travelling from Woolverstone towards Shotley lost control. Smashed through front fence, hedge gate of No 33 and No 34, Main Road, Woolverstone. Car written off. Police attended.

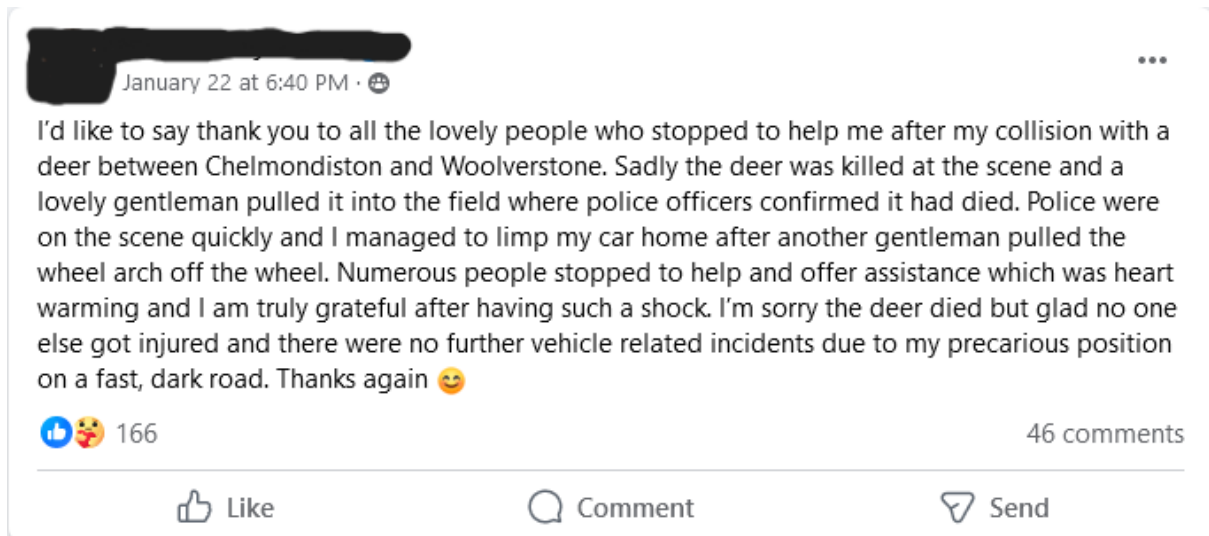


- July 2018 - 7pm Walnut Tree Farm. Van heading towards Ipswich lost control on bend hitting car travelling towards Shotley. Both cars written off, child ejected. Van driver compound tibial fracture. Police attended
- 17.07.18 – Daytime. White saloon car travelling from Shotley towards Woolverstone lost control outside No 33, Main Road, Woolverstone, bounced off grass verge, hit tree, span into hedge. Car written off. Police attended.
- 16.02.18 - 11p.m. Car travelling to Shotley span on bend and rolled into ditch opposite Walnut Tree Farm. Car rolled back onto wheels and towed away. Police did not attend.

6.7 Collisions with deer. Although collisions with deer do not need to be reported they pose hazard to vehicles both to the vehicle that collides and following traffic suddenly coming across a car stopped on the road either with the deer or because the car is damaged.

6.8 There have two incidents on this stretch of road already this year with vehicles hitting deer in 13.01.24 (Muntjac) and 22.01.24 (Fallow)





## 7. Police Comments

7.1 The Police comments state that *"the expectation should be to make reasonable progress"*.

A car travelling along this route of 1.17 Kms at 60 mph would take 44 seconds. A 40 mph it would take 65 seconds. This is a time saving of 21 seconds. Woolverstone PC do not think this slower speed would impede reasonable progress.

7.2 Woolverstone PC have presented a more complete collision history which should be a *"major consideration"*. It shows the reality of accidents along this route.

7.3 The police report is incorrect to claim there are two junctions. There are in fact three: Berners Lane, Bylam Lane and Richardsons Lane.

- 7.4 There are 2 field entrances to both the north and the south of this stretch of road.
- 7.5 The “*sweeping bends*” include blind spots at both ends of the routes, including the stretch in front of the seven Woolverstone residences, within the Woolverstone village sign.
- 7.6 Woolverstone PC believes there is pedestrian/cycle activity through the day. The reference to “*possible peaks associated with schools or community facilities*” does not apply here. Clearly that something may exist is not a requirement. This road is in rural area and the putative part of the criterion wouldn’t be expected to apply.
- 7.7 Visibility at the point where the footpath from the south reaches the B1456 may be good. However, the traffic coming from Woolverstone is accelerating sharply at this point because of entering the National speed limit and traffic from Shotley is decelerating as it enters the 30 mph. This measures 0.08 kms (85 yards) to a blind bend to the north-west. Walkers have to walk along the B1456 where there is no path to reach the footpath on the north side of the road and 0.19 kms (205 yards ) to a blind bend within the Woolverstone 30mph zone.
- 7.8 The Police report acknowledges that, during the period of the survey, 0.6% of vehicles exceeded the National speed limit.
- 7.9 The Police report raises the question: Does the collision history show that that speed was the major factor in accidents? We have already shown that the collision history provided by TREFFMAP is only a partial picture. While three of the accidents may have been partly due to wet conditions the report does not show that speed was **not** a contributing factor. In fact, one records: “*Loss of control. Exceeding speed limit.*” A second records: “*Lost control while going through a puddle*”. A third shows the driver of one vehicle was partially on the wrong side of the road, something which is a frequent additional hazard on this section of the road.
- 7.10 Woolverstone PC does not agree that there would be “*poor compliance*” and can see no evidence for this. Mean speeds of 42 mph and 38 mph suggest otherwise. In fact, it suggests there is already reasonable compliance. Furthermore, they are broadly similar to the mean and 85% speed data collected before the Woolverstone to Freston route was granted a lower speed limit.
- 7.11 Woolverstone PC argue that this stretch of road is an anomaly in the route from Freston Hill to Shotley Gate. It encourages rapid acceleration and reckless overtaking on such a short length of uneven road replete with blind bends. Police who attended collisions on

this route have commented on the excessive speed. A desk operation is not going to reveal the true nature of the road engineering or speed. Woolverstone PC agree that a “*consistency of approach*” should provide additional weight in consideration of this particular route. However, we do not see why this would necessitate “*for completeness*” a reassessment of other routes.

## **8 Further considerations from Suffolk County Council Speed Limit Policy**

Section 3:

*“The speed limit regime enables traffic authorities such as SCC to set local speed limits in situations where local needs and conditions suggest a speed limit which is different from the respective national speed limit.”*

Woolverstone PC are of the view that SCC should adjust the speed limit on this section of road to address local needs and conditions.

Section 10:

*Road environment, including level of road-side development and possible impacts on residents (e.g. severance, noise, or air quality).*

and

Section 15:

*“Moving traffic, particularly at higher speeds, gives rise to severance and affects the quality of life in communities.”*

Woolverstone PC are of the view that the seven households on this route suffer extreme level of severance. Just exiting and entering their properties carries risk. They cannot connect with their neighbours easily as there is no footpath. The local newsletter is not delivered. They cannot reach footpaths on foot without walking at the side of the road with traffic passing at 60mph. They are isolated from the community.

Noise is another issue. The B1456 marks the edge of the Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape (formerly, Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) This precious landscape is impacted by the noise of traffic due to the flat nature of the plateau along which the B1456 runs. Traffic come be heard coming from

Chelmondiston deep into the village. This noise is mostly tyre noise on the tarmac road surface. A reduction from 60 mph to 40 mph would, we believe, reduce average road noise from 73dB to 67 dB at fifty feet contributing to a greater tranquillity within the National Landscape.

Section 17:

*"...drivers should not be confronted with too many changes in speed limits over short distances."*

and

Section 21:

*"...to achieve a consistency of approach over a particular route"*

It is Woolverstone PC view that the journey from Freston to Shotley Gate would be made smoother with the gentle change between 30mph and 40mph rather than the current arrangement.

Section 18:

*"It is therefore government and Suffolk County Council policy that a 30mph speed limit should be used throughout villages."*

It is clear that this principle has not been applied *"throughout"* Woolverstone village.

Section 19 Rural Situations:

*"Where the character of a village falls outside this definition, discretion should be used in deciding the appropriate speed limit."*

Woolverstone PC urges Suffolk County Council to use its discretion, despite a shortfall against some criteria, and grant the lower speed limit. Precedent for this can be seen in the decision to reduce the speed limit between Freston and Woolverstone.

Section 20:

*“In respect of village 30mph limits in some circumstances it might be appropriate to consider an intermediate speed limit of 40mph prior to the 30mph terminal speed limit signs at the entrance, in particular where there are outlying houses beyond the village boundary or roads with high approach speeds.”*

The Mean vehicle speed through Woolverstone (2017) is just under 40mph in the 30mph zone with some vehicles travelling in excess of 50mph. All this is before the impact of a 30% - 40% increase of traffic through the development at former HMS Ganges and Shotley Marina and any further development “down the road” on the Peninsula. As a community we have done everything we can to encourage drivers to respect the 30mph speed limit through our village. Every wheelie bin has a 30mph sticker on it when they are put out each week. We have a community speed watch team shared with Chelmondiston. We have spent over £6,000 on two speed signs to remind drivers of the speed limit and intend to buy at least two more - when we can afford it. Police attend the village every few weeks with the Safe Cam, although they do not always come at the best time of day or site themselves on the most appropriate side of the road. There is no more that we can do to encourage compliance. With our radar speed signs we can record the data on speeding traffic.

22 April 2017 SCC conducted a speed survey on the B1456 in Woolverstone. Site A3831 within the 30mph zone. Traffic travelling from Shotley 85% = 37mph. Mean = 32mph. According to Highway Safety engineers this should be a cause for concern.

On one representative day within Woolverstone 30mph zone at the SCC site opposite Holbrook Lodge. 24 hours of 13th July 2022.

35 – 39 mph = 359. 40 – 44 mph = 106. 45 – 49 mph = 21. 50 – 54 mph = 7. 55 – 59 mph = 1. 60 – 64 mph = 1

Total in excess of 35mph = 495. 16% of traffic, in one flow direction, was travelling at 35 mph or above in a 30mph zone. This is with our Radar sign in operation.

Our most recent(18.09.23 - 16.10.23) SCC ANPR report provides the following data. Site 240m inside the 30mph zone. 3969 photos taken. 886 at 35mph+. 22% of recorded traffic.

This would have similar benefits at the Chelmondiston end of the stretch of road, calming traffic as it entered the village.

### **Appendices**

Correspondence from residents along B156 from Woolverstone to Chelmondiston.

No 33 – Woraker family

No 38 – Richard Favill

Walnut Tree Farm – Steve Pryke

1 Anchor Mill Cottages – John Deacon

Bylam Lane meadow – Janet West

Chelmondiston (Deer) – Sally Gooding

Chelmondiston (Deer) – Paul Gooding

### **Separate document**

Hilary House – Tracey Barber

The Woraker Family  
33 Main Road  
Woolverstone  
Ipswich  
Suffolk  
IP9 1BA

1<sup>st</sup> February 2024

Living in Woolverstone Main Road National Speed limit stretch

Dear Simon

Thanks for the copy of the document with regards to the speed survey conducted by Suffolk County Council and relevant data.

I was pleased that Woolverstone Parish Council with SCC Highways have conducted this speed survey and I hope it helps to assist us in our ongoing campaign to achieve a reduction in the speed limit through the Woolverstone to Chelmondiston section of the B1456. As you know, for us a residents along this stretch the completely nonsensical 60mph national speed limit causes us, as a family, distress on an almost daily basis.

I don't feel the speed survey and accompanying crash / accident data provides an accurate measure of the problem. I also don't think the crash data is correct as it states 5 incidents. I have had x 3 serious incidents within yards of our property that is situated 200 yards into the National speed limit zone, details of all these accidents set out below in my response.

I also feel the results of the speed survey seem to be misleading, the speed of the traffic is higher in the evening / early mornings when people seem to use the lack of traffic to take the opportunity to travel in excess of 60mph and most of the accidents seem to happen at these times.

The main issue for us as a family living within this section is the speed vehicles travel on these old design, twisty road with multiple blind bends metres from people's driveway exits onto the roadway. The current 60mph limit, in my opinion, is just not suitable in this location.

I feel that the inconsistency of a sensible speed limit on the Shotley Peninsula does encourage fatigue with drivers obeying any limit, to have a 40mph limit on the B1456 at Freston, then, as you come into Woolverstone a mile or so of 30mph and then straight into a short national (still inside the village) then back into a 30mph into Chelmondiston minutes later!, the actual national speed limit sign almost encourages people to use this short section to overtake. It's like a green light to put your foot down for no reason, this results in drivers performing overtaking manoeuvres in front of our properties. Surely if we even out the limit to a maximum of 40mph it takes the temptation away and reduce the risk of accidents.

We have family who live on Mersea island near Colchester, the long one road stretch is so similar to our peninsula and previously there was an original national speed limit in place for approx. 8 miles to East Mersea, but due to multiple accidents the decision was made to change the limit to 40mph and enforce a maximum of 40mph limit on the whole island / peninsula and from what I have read, it seems to have made a massive difference.

To me it's simple - slow the traffic, reduce the accidents.

This National limit here in Woolverstone has a negative impact on the first houses into the 30mph zone near the entrance to Woolverstone Hall. I watch the vehicles approach the 30mph zone near to the school entrance at frightening speeds as they exit the national limit. They must be passing the entrance to the school just inside the 30mph zone well in excess of 45mph.

It is a depressing every day scenario , as we get our children into the car for their journey off to school we remind them to be as quiet as they can so that we can hear if there is approaching traffic

(normally at rush hour so the traffic is always in a hurry). We pull off our drive gingerly, edging out too see if any of the approaching vehicles are tucked into one of the blind bends (with our windows open to help listen ), passing traffic regularly has to brake from frightening speeds to enable us to pull out.



Not only pulling out the driveway but slowing down to turn into our driveway, people tend to overtake us as they are travelling to fast up behind us.

Crossing the road on foot is again, incredibly dangerous, we have x 2 children under 9 years old and a dog! So, to get the 5 of us sometimes with bikes across the road to the only footpath on this stretch is just horrendous.

Whenever we have visitors to our house, we have to assist them to pull out onto the road when leaving, this normally consists of one of us looking down the road (around the blind bend) to ensure it is safe to pull out. It really is crazy and I worry for our visitors not understanding the speed people are approaching. Our visitors regularly comment as to how dangerous it is having cars travelling along the stretch as they do.

I'm aware that the previous people who lived at our house' circa 2017, actually had a guest pull out in their car and get T-Boned by another car, I think it was fairly serious. Police attended.

The noise of the road is also an issue, this area is supposed to be an AONB, This National speed limit has a huge effect on this in my opinion. A lower speed limit without the roaring of engines and tyre / road contact would surely make for a more tranquil, and be more suitable for, an AONB. The roaring traffic scares wildlife and worse, kills so much.

I have seen many dead deer on our road, tragically sometimes large adult deer and their young together killed.

I have recently (30/1/24) moved a dead deer from near our house before as it was upsetting our children, it's just heart breaking to see. Large animal carcasses also pose a problem to people swerving to avoid them and on this dated, windy road it can become yet another hazard.

As a family we watch wildlife through the seasons, including the deer in the field behind our property. It's so sad to see when they are killed, we all know wildlife gets killed on our roads but in



this AONB with 100 plus deer living so close to the road, surely a reduction in the speed limit would make sense? I'm convinced by lowering the speed of the road the wildlife will stand more of a chance of survival.

Living in this situation we have felt very cut off from the rest of the village, especially now as we don't get the local village magazine. I'm aware the magazine distributors say the road is too dangerous to navigate.

The local postman 'Pete' has said "working this part of my daily route is frightening".

We have parties for our children on their birthdays sometimes up to 20 cars so when we run out of room, the parents have decided park on the grass verge on the other side of the road., Its very scary to watch the parents clutching kids hands and running across the road, we have considered putting signs up and down the road saying 'SLOW DOWN CHILDREN CROSSING'.

These are just a number of ways this crazy stretch of national speed limit road effects our lives, we are really hoping the authorities would listen to us and try to understand our position on this.

Over the Years I have documented and where possible taken photographs of the incidents that have happened near to our house and, as documented below, actually crashed into our property. Again, I was slightly concerned that it looked like only one of these incidents appeared on the crash data in the report.

Please see below my documentation of the incidents / accidents just outside our property.

#### **ACCIDENT 16/7/18**

Approx 10pm a white salon car coming from Shotley direction heading towards Woolverstone in front of our house, lost control on the bend, bounced off our grass verge in front of our front post and rail fence, hit a tree and span into the hedge, car a write off.

I was first on scene, the driver suffered cuts to the face and arms, police were called and attended. If the car didn't bounce off the elevated verge in front of our boundary fence, it would have come to rest in our garden.

If this was during the day and we would have been trying to cross the road or the children were playing in the garden, it would have been terrible.

#### **ACCIDENT 17/9/2019**

On this occasion if this crash would have been during the day, one of us using our front gate at that time would have been killed.

At approx. 1 a.m., a young man travelling from Woolverstone to Shotley lost control again in front of our house resulting in his car smashing through our front fence and hedging and coming to a halt in the front gate post.

This accident caused a large amount of damage to our property, the car was a write off. We ended up with a wheel and suspension strut from the crashed car actually in our garden. The police were called and multiple police units attended.

The property was unsecure for my children and pets therefore couldn't be anywhere near the front garden until the contractors from the insurance company could carry out all the reinstatement of the hedge, fencing and gates.

This accident caused great distress for us and as a result of this incident we don't let our children play in the front garden.

Please see photo below and additional attached photos.



### **MOTORCYCLE ACCIDENT 21/7/20**

Accident yards from our house, this one very serious.

At approx. 4pm on 21/7/20 a motorcycle coming through the village within the 30mph zone into the national speed limit heading to Chelmondiston overtook a row of cars and unfortunately hit another car head on estimated at 60-70 mph.

The car the motorcycle hit had a car with family in it including x 3 very young children.

I was one of the first on the scene as I was standing in my front garden and actually witnessed the crash unfold, I was initially drawn to look to where the accident happened by the noise of the motorcycle (a sports bike) accelerating (engine screaming) out the 30mph limit as they frequently do, from what I saw he overtook cars at speed but couldn't get back onto his side of the road and collided (head on) with the car coming in the opposite direction.

I have to say the scene was truly horrifying, something that will stay with me for a very long time. The family in the people carrier were generally ok apart from minor bruising / abrasions including seatbelt marks and marks from the airbags, the young children were screaming and incredibly upset.

The motorcyclist wasn't so lucky, I was first to attend to him as he was half on the road and on the grass verge, he has been catapulted a fair way down the road and he laid in a very disfigured / unnatural manner, I was actually expecting him to be deceased.

He has lost a fair amount of his clothing and skin where he has slid down the road , from what I could see he had broken many bones and was bleeding quite badly, it was an awful sight. I stayed with him and did what I could for him for some time until I was assisted by an off-duty nurse, eventually an ambulance arrived followed by a paramedic car, an emergency doctor and lastly the air ambulance who ended up taking him to hospital.

The paramedics treated the children and occupants of the car actually inside my house as the accident site was close to us.

Later once the scene was a little quieter, I noticed a lot of police still around as the road was closed for some time, I spent a little while discussing the incident with them and in their words – “the national speed limit in that stretch was ridiculous, and the inconsistency in speed limits - just odd”.

I feel that there is a good chance that if the stretch of road through our village through to Chelmondiston was all 30mph or certainly not a national limit, what happened that day probably wouldn't have taken place.



#### **INDICENT 26/1/2021**

This incident happened on Sunday 26th Jan at approx. 1pm we (myself, my wife and young kids) pulled out of our driveway onto main road, as we normally do (listening for noise of speeding traffic first as we gingerly pull out) but on this occasion a black BMW car approached at such speed, I would estimate approx. 80 mph and went past us without slowing down and almost hit a small blue coloured car that again had children in it. The blue car was forced onto the grass verge and skidded to a stop. We stopped and made sure they were ok and they were clearly shaken up. The BMW stopped momentarily but then drove off. This incident was the closest we have seen to a car v car head on. There is no doubt in my mind that would have been a fatal accident if the cars would have come together.

## **INCIDENT 7/4/23**

I was cycling from Woolverstone village to my house within the National speed limit, upon getting myself into position to slow to pull into my driveway I heard a car coming up behind me at an incredible speed, even giving him plenty of notice that my intention was to turn right and indicating with a hand signal he continued to approach from behind at high speed, he then came past me with his hand on the horn as if it was completely my fault for even daring to cycle on this stretch. There is no doubt he was travelling in excess of 70-80mph, it was unreal. I was literally metres from my drive and I could hear him coming out of the 30mph zone, a good 150yards behind me within seconds he was on me! I'm a pretty experienced cyclist and have has a few near misses over the years but that was madness.

These incidents and accidents are only my accounts and there are many more along this stretch, I would hope that the thoughts and experiences of us as family's living along here would be considered when making a decision with the speed limit in the future.

Many Thanks.

Peter, Tamsin, Oliver and Freya Woraker.

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Pete West

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Send by email on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024 to [Paul.West@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.West@suffolk.gov.uk)

**RE: Speed report in association to B1457 between Woolverstone and Chelmondiston**

My family are residents at Hilary House, Main Road, IP9 1BA. Our house is located on the Main Road B1457. We would like to support the case to reduce the speed limit from National Speed limit down to 40 or 30mph.

Having lived at this property for three years I have **additional evidence** and **my family's personal lived experiences** which need to be considered before a decision is made.

**Please see attached supporting video which accompanies my response.**

I request both the video and this written document are properly reviewed and considered. I also request that this documentation is filed accordingly, because if the speed limit is not reduced, we can refer to this evidence in the event of the outlined risk to life, occurring in the future. The risk to life is a daily occurrence, so it's only a matter of time before an incident occurs and we want to ensure evidence of this documentation is retain for any legal prosecution in the future.

Video link here: <https://we.tl/t-zvjZgMwKct>

**My points to support the reduction in speed are detailed below:**

- **This stretch of the B1457 is the only section that is set at the national speed limit.** This road is the main line route onto the Shotley peninsula for cars, big marina vehicles and construction traffic. The nature of the windy narrow B road and history of collisions means the B1457 is either 40 or 30 mph throughout, the only exception to this, is our stretch of road which is currently set at the national speed limit. We request our speed limit is reduced in line with the rest of the B1457.
- **The previous Freston to Woolverstone report, was pretty much identical to this report and the speed reduction was approved & reduced to 40mph.** So given this report and speed reduction was authorised with the similar conditions... objectively and from an equality standpoint the conclusion should be consistent with previous decisions, to reduce the speed on the same road with the same circumstances.
- **Daily risk of accidents when exiting our properties** – The report wrongly points to a straight road - what is seen on the map is different to the reality of the road. I have photo and video evidence to support this fact. Due to the bends in the road (see supporting video and images), the blind spots mean that there is a daily risk of accidents. Cars who drive at a slower speed enable us to safely exit our properties and it gives them more time to see us, enabling them to respond and stop. But because residents are impinged by the multiple blind spots (which are adjacent to our entrances), it means we must partially pull out onto the road to establish if there is any oncoming traffic. This severance means that the blind spots hide the cars, and we can only see them when they are immediately next to us travelling at high speeds, meaning the cars have to quickly swerve to avoid hitting us (given our car bonnet is out in the road). It means we have daily near misses. A reduction in speed would give both parties more time to act and avoid collision/drastric swerving towards oncoming traffic.
- **High risk of accidents when reversing out** – There are a large number of properties on this stretch. In our cluster of houses there are 7 and a further 17 houses access their properties via this stretch of road. In the absence of large driveways, it also means we (and trade vans) reverse out onto the road. This causes stress, anxiety and we receive abuse from passing drivers because we're reversing out in front of them whilst they're travelling at 60mph. Naturally when you're driving at 60mph the last thing you expect to see is a car reversing out onto the road.

Oncoming traffic are currently notified that they are entering Woolverstone via our village sign, however there is no speed limit sign. Whilst we believe the speed should be reduced for the entire stretch from Chelmondiston to Woolverstone, at the very least, when entering Woolverstone, the speed limit needs to be reduced to be consistent with the rest of the village, given we are within the village boundary. Given our entrances are not visible to oncoming traffic, this speed reduction sign will signify that there are indeed houses and vehicles likely to be moving, priming them to be ready to stop if required.

- **Risk of sever accident due to risk of head on collisions** – upon exiting property we're often met with cars attempting to overtake at the same time. So, once we've successful driven out onto the road, we are then met with a car driving towards us. There have been multiple times where we've nearly had a head on collision because the blind spots don't allow you to see the cars coming or indeed that there is someone overtaking. If the speed was reduced this would mitigate the need for cars to overtake in a 40/30 and would indicate to drivers, they are entering a residential area and likely to experience manoeuvring vehicles.
- **Volume of accidents on this stretch of road** - whilst there have been various accidents reported, there have been further unreported accidents. There have accidents involving single car accidents where drivers have not reported to the police and cars have been quickly retrieved or minimal damage they've driven off. We see dead deer on the side of the road weekly. There are two carcasses on the road currently.
- **Herds of deer increased risk to car accidents** - We have two woodlands behind our property which is home to two or more herds of deer. Everyday deer graze and sit in the feel adjacent to the B1457. We can count daily over 100 deer occupying the field. The fallow deer are animals of significant size (50-90kg),

who frequently cross the road. We're not talking about small muntjac deer but animals of significant stature crossing the B1457 daily, presenting risk to collision. Dead deer are seen by the side of the road frequently, the most recent accident just last week, where a car was written off. See image (at the end of this document) of recent accident and evidence of Deer crossing.

- **Risk to pedestrian life** - it's only a matter of time before someone is killed by a car. The postman Pete on a number of occasions has had near misses where cars have been inches away from running him over. There are multiple other users who walk on the road (because there is no pavement) to access the property. These 'on foot' road users include: The Postman (daily use), Suffolk News delivery (Daily), Delivery drivers (daily), residents food delivery vans (weekly), residents walking between property (frequently), workman / maintenance. Our food delivery driver arrives in the evening (whilst dark with no street lights, with the van parked out on the road, again this has caused numerous issues and risk to the delivery driver. Similarly, residents should have the freedom to access the footpath opposite, on a daily basis to access the countryside, access local school and church.
- **Children unable to safely cross the road** – due to the speed of the traffic it is not safe to cross the road with our children. As evidenced in the supporting video, we need to step out into the road, to establish if the blind spot is hiding an oncoming vehicle. If there is a vehicle you need to jump back quickly to avoid being knocked over. This is too high risk for our children. It means our children are confined to their gardens and don't get to access their immediate countryside, because they can't safely access the footpath, local private school (Ipswich High school which is a short 5 minute's walk), local state primary school (short 15 walk) or local church (short 10 minute walk) and local pub But and Oyster (short 20 min walk).
- **Our seven properties are within Woolverstone boundary of the village that should apply the same speed limit** – our properties are within the Woolverstone, as per the current Woolverstone Boundary Village welcome sign. As we are within the Woolverstone boundary and part of the Village with access to the church, school etc, we should have the same speed applied as per the rest of the village.

**New development in Shotley means constant flow of traffic at peak times (see video).** It means we are late to school and it impacts my children's education. With this constant flow of traffic at high speed it makes it impossible to exit the property safely in the mornings, because the cars in the blind spot travelling at 60 mph means we can't effectively turn right towards Chelmondiston – that's because cars are driving too fast and unable to stop at high speed. This is impacting my children's education, despite leaving ample time it's taking longer and longer every morning to get out of our property. The headteacher at Chelmondiston primary school can ratify this. Additionally, with this being the only main route onto the peninsula and with the recent Shotley development, this is resulting in a constant traffic flow which has exacerbated the daily risk to injury, life and noise pollution.

- **Wellbeing of local community impacted** – everyone is aware of the risk of this road, and it prevents the community from cycling on this stretch of road, impacting wellbeing. Similarly, it's too dangerous for us as adults to leave our property on bike and it's certainly unsafe for our children to experience or enjoy cycling. A reduction in speed limit would make it accessible for us to not only access the footpath but also to safely access the road by bike like the rest of this B Road.
- **Impact on mental health and fitness levels** – the exacerbated issues with this road is meaning increased stress and anxiety, because every day our households are running the gauntlet of exiting our properties with cars driving at high speeds masked by the blind spots. The stress of leaving the property means we feel prisoners in our own home. It's unfair that we can't access the countryside, walk to school safely or even pop to the shops in the car is a challenge. We are even deterred to leave by car... we often thinking 'actually it's a busy time of day, it's going to be a nightmare getting out, let's not go out' – which is having a big impact on our lifestyle and wellbeing because it's tricky to leave by car and impossible to access the footpath safely, so we are confined and trapped in our homes.

- **Impact on our lifestyle**– We had to sell our family caravan because it was too unsafe to reverse into our drive. After having various near misses and abuse from drivers, it created so much stress, and we decided that it wasn't worth it and sold our caravan, again impinging our children's lifestyle as a result. This also impacted us financially because having purchased the caravan new, we sold it at its peak of depreciation.
- **Adverse environmental impact through recent Shotley development** – means road noise volume has increase impacting not only our quality of life but also our quality of sleep in. We have replaced our windows to try and reduce this noise, costing us £50,000, but those cars driving at high speed created increased noise pollution which wakes my children. Research shows that at 30mph you hear a car engine, any speed above that, the noise is created by the tyres. So we know that cutting speeds from 70 to 60mph cuts noise by up to 50%. Research has also found that reducing speed of 60/70 down to below 40mph can cut noise by 3-5DB. We feel we have equal rights to have the same opportunity have noise reduced like as others on this road.
- **Impacts the speed in the villages of Woolverstone & Chelmondiston.** When drivers are taking the opportunity to drive at 60 it means they hit the 30 mph sign at both villages as a result they take longer to slow down to achieve the speed limit. My children go to school in Chelmondiston, we drive even though in the summer we could walk (but can't because of the inability to cross), and we've seen so many accidents of cars pulling out of Lings Lane. Similarly seeing children crossing the road when cars are still driving at over 40mph. This is the same in Woolverstone and due to the bends, we've seen cars driving at speed and crashing. I believe the reduction in speed limit, will be consistent with the rest of the road, and minimise speeding in the villages where various accidents have occurred in recent months.
- **The only stretch of 60, signals to drivers it's safe to drive at this speed and encourages drivers to overtake.** This B road is a 9 mile stretch from Whersted through to Shotley, because of the conditions of the road throughout the limit is set at either 30 or 40. Our windy road (1 mile in length) is the only 60mph stretch, this signals to drivers that based on this 9mile stretch of road this stretch is a safe place to overtake. As evidenced with the multiple S bends, blind spots and 24 properties manoeuvring across this 1 mile stretch, it is treacherous for pedestrians, residential access and oncoming cars. This 1 mile of stretch is a death trap waiting to happen and you have the power to mitigate loss of life by making the fair decision to reduce the speed in line with the rest of the road.

#### **Inaccuracies in the report that are unsubstantiated.**

- **Regarding the comment of good visibility to footpath** – evidence supports the road has lots of bends, blind spots with poor and dangerous level of visibility (even with the recent hedge cutting)
- **Accidents** – the report does not consider the unreported accidents, the volume of dead deer in the road, as well as the multiple accidents that occur at Walnut Tree farm, hitting the barn on multiple occasions.
- **Dispute fact that's speed limit change won't help.** I dispute one person's opinion that speed reduction won't help. There are research papers that shows a reduction in speed does help. Indeed the theory of calculate risk mean - rule followers will reduce speed to adhere (which will help greatly) , and those that don't comply, they apply calculated risk. So, whilst they won't adhere to speed limit, their calculated risk will be adjusted closer to the new speed limit, to mitigate implications and



proportion of risk if caught. Any speed reduction on our stretch of road will give us a greater chance of accessing the foot path and exiting safely.

### Based on the SCC Speed limit policy (policy details highlighted in Blue)

Having looked at the policy, our case adheres to the guidelines in the policy to reduce the speed.

- The policy outlines: “estimated collision and injury savings should also be an important factor when considering changes to a local speed limit.” The outlined risk of life and accident risk with pedestrians/deer/car manoeuvres restricted by blind spots presents evidence of high risk to pedestrian lives and car collisions.

The policy also outlines the following in blue

The following are the important factors when considering what is an appropriate speed limit:

- History of collisions, including frequency, severity, types and causes; Proof of accidents, additional unreported accidents, recent deer accidents, incidents of pedestrian near misses
- Road geometry and engineering (width, sightlines, bends, junctions, accesses and safety barriers etc.); As evidenced... road has multiple bend with blinds spots and residential property entrances are not visible to oncoming traffic.
- Road function (strategic, through traffic, local access etc.); Main route on to the Shotley peninsula, used by all residents on the peninsula. It's the only stretch of road that remains a 60. Heavy vehicles include marina traffic and construction traffic. As the only route onto the Peninsula, it means residents can't cycle, access the footpath or safely access our properties.
- Composition of road users (including existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users); As outline vulnerable road users with risk to loss of life include cyclists, pedestrians crossing road to access footpath opposite, postman, newspaper man, supermarket delivery, trade engineers and residents walking between property or crossing road to open gates. I have got out of my car to open the gate before and the oncoming car missed me by a couple of inches.
- Existing traffic speeds; and High speeds were noted and whilst the mean traffic is between 40-50, that average will be reduced with speed reduction with majority adhering to the new speed limit, and those that don't will apply risk aversion and reduce risk mitigation, so whilst those drivers will never comply to limits it will still be an intervention to help reduce their speed by a percentage and thus making it easier to overcome the challenges outlined.

The risk of collision increases within settlements and the selected speed limit should be appropriate to the potential dangers. Likely areas of concern within settlements will include:

- junctions There are multiple junctions on the stretch of road, one track accessing a further 3 properties, including farm traffic and access to Anglian Water works, and others accessing properties near Chelmondiston and one road linking to Holbrook. Junctions include:

Total number of properties effected by this stretch of road is: 24

- Our house and 6 neighbours
- Access to Berners Lane entrance access to 3 properties
- Access to Richardson Lane east entrance access to 9 properties and Alton Water Sewage works
- Access to Bylam Lane which connects Chelmo/Woolverstone to Holbrook and access to 4 properties
- Access to the Walnut Tree Farm entrance – 1 property
- 
- private accesses – There are 24 residential properties moving/reversing out onto the 60 mph road

- local facilities (shops, post office, schools, public houses, etc.) - yes local Ipswich High School (short walk), Chelmondiston Primary school, Woolverstone Church and local pub Pin Mill – these are local amenities that are accessible walking distance from our properties – if we could safely cross the road.

- pedestrian activity (crossing the road, walking on footways, walking on the carriageways) Pedestrian activity as outlined, postman daily, daily amazon deliveries, newspaper deliveries, food delivery, crossing to access foot path opposite. So many pedestrian users that put their lives at risk on a daily basis.

From the photo, video and written evidence, it is clear the bends in the road and risk created by the blind spots presents a severe risk to accidents and risk to loss of life for pedestrians. Ignoring this evidence will be detrimental to not only resident wellbeing, but the local communities ability to access the road for cycling and risk to accident and loss of life.

Behavioural science evidence shows that a reduction in speed is a successful intervention to help make roads safe for user – after all that’s why we have speed limits in the first place. If it wasn’t successful or needed, it would negate the need for any speed limits. Even a small reduction in speed will give us a better chance of safely exiting our property and improve the chances of the oncoming traffic being able to stop.

Speed limits were introduced for all the reasons outlined above. It will have such a huge impact to the wellbeing and safety of all the 24 house and indeed benefit the safety of the 6000 vehicle trips a day.

Our lived experiences are irrefutable, and to live here for a few a days you would experience the stress, anxiety and daily risk to injury and live that we experience.

We see no rational reason why we cannot reduce the speed limit. From our lived experiences, all we see are the benefits to the health, safety and wellbeing of all road users, including the drivers themselves. We trust you’ll make the right decision.

Please keep this document on file should it be required for evidence in the future.

Kind Regards

Tracey, Andy, Scarlett (Age 8), Charlie (Age 6) Woolnough

Driving from Woolverstone towards Chelmondiston.

Only one out of 7 entrances are visible as seen in this photo



Woolverstone village sign signaling entry into Woolverstone Village which appears before the houses. Meaning the houses are within boundary and speed limit should comply with the rest of the village.



We need to pull out into the road partially to see if there is a car hidden in the blind spot. Cars then have to swerve into the road, to avoid hitting our car but risks hitting oncoming traffic



Evidence showing multiple spot where fallow and red deer cross the road



Recent accident involving PC Sally Gooding



No visibility to cross the road from footpath. Blind spot hiding cars travelling at 60mph – risk of instant loss of life



Example blind spot exiting property – looking towards Chelmondiston



Example blind spot exiting property looking towards Woolverstone



More evidence of the bends and blind spots around our 7 houses



B1456 -WOOLVERSTONE TO CHELMONDISTON PROPOSED 40MPH SPEED LIMIT

No 38 Main Road

Richard Favill

**Document: Urgent Concerns Regarding B1457 Road Safety and Community Well-being**

**Overview:**

The B1457 has emerged as a critical concern for residents due to safety hazards, particularly on the stretch with a national speed limit. The combination of high-speed traffic, wildlife crossings, and lack of safety measures poses significant risks to residents and the our local community.

**Our Key Concerns:**

1. **Speed Discrepancy:**

- The singular stretch with a national speed limit stands out, creating a hazardous environment for residents in the adjacent residential area.

**2. Residential Accessibility:**

- Difficulty in accessing and safely exiting properties on this high-speed stretch poses a daily challenge for us as a family. Please see images attached image 1 shows the unsighted nature on exiting our driveway and image 2 shows you how far we must pull out of our driveway until a clear view of the road is visible.

**3. Wildlife Hazards:**

- Frequent crossings of a deer herd from the adjacent field have led to recent accidents, posing a threat to both drivers and wildlife.

**4. Collision Risks:**

- Increased risk of collisions with overtaking traffic and potential head-on collisions, especially for residents exiting properties.

**5. Bendy Roads and Blind Spots:**

- The winding nature of the road introduces blind spots, elevating the risk of accidents, particularly for us accessing the public footpath on the other side of the road.

**6. Nighttime Dangers:**

- During night hours, traffic speeds escalate significantly, further intensifying safety concerns for our family.

**7. Isolation of Houses:**

- We feel isolated as walking to neighbours is dangerous due to high-speed traffic, creating barriers within the community.

**8. Property Maintenance Risks:**

- We find basic property maintenance, such as hedge trimming, becomes perilous due to the constant high-speed traffic flow.

**9. Lack of Warning Signs:**

- Absence of signs or reduced limits to notify drivers of turning vehicles or potential deer crossings contributes to the existing risks.

**10. Increased Traffic from Developments:**

- The recent development at the Ganges has resulted in a surge of large HGVs and delivery vans, leading to a continuous flow of high-speed traffic, making it challenging to safely exit our property.

**11. Motorbike Hazards:**

- The prevalence of fast-moving motorbikes adds to the dangers, particularly when pulling out of our driveway due to the winding nature of the road.

**12. Overtaking Risks:**

- Speeding cars attempting to overtake us while we slow down to turn into our driveway have resulted in numerous near-miss incidents.

### 13. **Cycling Safety Concerns:**

- The high speeds on the road make it unsafe for the local community to use bicycles, limiting a healthy and sustainable mode of transportation.

### 14. **Emotional and Well-being Impact:**

- Since moving to the property in 2021, We have experienced heightened fear and anxiety, with daily activities such as walking becoming a harrowing experience. The constant threat of accidents impacts the emotional well-being and overall lifestyle of our family.

### **Conclusion:**

We believe immediate intervention is imperative to address these pressing safety concerns on the B1457. Collaborative efforts between residents, local authorities, it is crucial to implement effective solutions and ensure the safety and well-being of our community. Urgent measures are needed to mitigate risks, enhance road safety, and restore a sense of security for all residents.



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17<sup>th</sup> January 2024

**Re: B1456 National Speed limit zone.**

Dear Sir,

I have read with considerable interest the document from the Chair of Woolverstone Parish Council pertaining to a reduction in the speed limit through the Woolverstone to Chelmondiston section of the B1456.

Having read the relevant document from Suffolk County Council regarding speed limit alterations I would agree that not all of the criteria for speed reduction are met by this application.

However several of the criteria are met and are underestimated by the data provided.

My home, which is situated towards the Chelmondiston end of the national speed limit section, is positioned immediately after a minor S bend in the road heading Southbound. Reviewing the accident data provided in the 59 month period from the 1/1/2018 to the 1/12/22 the accident log records a total of 5 incidents. This data is incorrect.



Over the period that I have lived at Walnut Tree farm I have prospectively collected this data following an accident which occurred soon after we moved to the property in May 2004. I can inform the parish council that since May 2004 there have been 15 accidents along the stretch of road adjacent to Walnut Tree farm. In the 59 months between 1/1/2018 and 1/12/22 there were 4 crashes immediately outside our property alone. During last Autumn I made a freedom of information request to Suffolk and Norfolk Police to confirm this data. This request was met with the response that the police were unable to supply this data as they do not maintain these records. One of these incidents caused severe limb threatening injuries from which the driver was lucky to survive whilst in the other car a child was ejected who I rescued from the field margin. Passenger ejections from motor vehicles are often associated with fatal outcomes.

Most of these incidents occur in the late evening and often the police are not called which is why, I believe, the accident log is incorrect. Three of those accidents have resulted in major structural damage to my property requiring extensive remedial building work. In all of those accidents speed has been a causative factor. I am very happy to supply the parish council the prospectively collected accident data if it is helpful.

Although the Suffolk County Council document lists several criteria that are a requirement to reduce the speed limit it is clear that the paramount reason for reducing the speed limit is safety. Having attended almost all of the crashes that have taken place on the road outside my property I am amazed that no one has yet been fatally injured. I have expertise in this area as I spend many of my day and night time hours providing consultant surgical trauma care at the Ipswich Hospital. It is my opinion as a medical expert witness that it is only a matter of time before a fatality occurs on this stretch of road.

My other observation with regard to the speed limits on the entirety of the B1456 are that between Freston Hill and Shotley Gate the only exception to either a forty or thirty miles per hour speed limit is the short stretch between Woolverstone and Chelmondiston. These variable speed limits give drivers a mixed message and encourages rapid acceleration and braking at the start and finish of the national speed limit zone that we are discussing. It is my belief that the presence of this short stretch of national speed limit makes drivers less focused on the speed at which they are travelling. This can lead to a loss of concentration which in conjunction with continuing variable road conditions caused by weather and the presence of road debris brought onto the carriageway by agricultural vehicles from multiple field entrances is involved in the causation of many of the accidents that I have referenced. A more consistent speed limit along the entire length of the B1456 would help to focus drivers concentration.

It should also be noted that the rapid changes in speed along this section of road also has an environmental impact as acceleration burns proportionally more harmful fossil fuel than driving in a steady state.

As a final point it appears that Suffolk County Council are making a proactive effort to reduce speed limits in Ipswich and its surrounding area. Examples of this would include the reduction of the speed limit on Foxhall Road from the national speed limit to 50 miles per hour. More recently the dual carriageway A12 around Martlesham has also been reduced from the national speed limit to 50 miles per hour. When the road conditions in these areas are compared to the criteria in Suffolk County Councils documents it is my impression that the B1456 between Woolverstone and Chelmondiston fits those criteria equally well so there is already a precedent in place for speed reduction.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Faithfully,

*Steven Pryke*

Mr. S.E.R. Pryke

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 06, 2024 at 6:14 PM  
**From:** "John Deacon" <JohnDeacon1@outlook.com>  
**To:** "Woolverstone PC" <woolverstonepc@gmx.co.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: B1456 Speed Limit report

Hello Simon,

Good to hear from you. Good luck with your quest – it's mighty difficult to get a speed-limit changed. I know from when we tried in Chelmo' a good few years ago. Hope the below helps.

Regards,

John//

=====

The hedge incident the other week was the third at that spot since we've been at Anchor Mill; in sequence:

- 2010 – a young driver took the bend too fast and ended up demolishing the woodshed by the hedge. Luckily she wasn't hurt since the shed was quite rickety and had a lot of loosely stacked pallets which acted as a crumple zone. Cost was £4.5K for a new shed.
- About 12/18 months later we arrived home late one evening to find that the tarmac by our pull-in at the bottom of the garden was steaming, and that we couldn't enter the track because there was a trunk of our holly tree blocking the way. Apparently someone had hit the hedge / tree and there was a car fire – hence steaming tar after the fire-brigade attended. We don't know if the driver was injured but I would think so. Cost was ½ days work to remove the tree trunk – holly is amazingly dense! - and generally make good.
- 2024 – the other week. A van came round the corner too fast and skidded (probably on some ice?). After demolishing the hedge and a couple of small trees the van came to rest about 2m from the above cycle/wood shed. The hedge acted like a brake which was lucky because now the shed is pretty substantial and the van would definitely come off worst had it made contact - so no one was hurt luckily. Cost was about 1 days work to make good + c£150 for new fencing, some blackthorn saplings and a new specimen shrub.

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JOHN DEACON

1 Anchor Mill Cottage,

Main Road,  
CHELMONDISTON,  
IP9 1DP

**Sent:** Monday, January 29, 2024 at 5:55 PM  
**From:** "west73" <west73@btinternet.com>  
**To:** "Woolverstone PC" <woolverstonepc@gmx.co.uk>  
**Subject:** Re: Accident last week

This accident was at a garden boundary /B1456 20 yds approx west of the 30mph sign for Chelmondiston village. I think the week before last.

Travelling at speed towards Shotley, a van "hit an icy patch" just after the slight bend at Richardson Lane. The van then left the road, veered left across the grass verge and came to rest in the garden of Mr John Deacon, 1 Anchor Mill Cottages Chelmondiston.

The hedging forming the boundary has had to be replaced with fencing.

Mr Deacon recalls this is the third such accident damaging his property in the past 10 years. Hopefully Mr Deacon can supply date, time etc. if relevant.

As I stood at Mr Deacons front door, second property into Chelmondiston , there was not one car passed appearing to travel at the legal 30 mph, all appeared to be going considerably faster. Has there ever been a highways speed monitor check on that stretch of the B1456?

Are Chelmondiston Parish Council also involved in this consultation/proposal to SCC/Highways? I will try to get a better photo tomorrow.

Regards Janet

**Sent:** Sunday, January 28, 2024 at 11:32 PM  
**From:** "west73" <west73@btinternet.com>  
**To:** woolverstonepc@gmx.co.uk  
**Subject:** B1456

For this accident I didn't see how it happened - both cars facing Ipswich on each side of the road at the junction of Bylam Lane. Maybe the police could advise if you quote them the RTA number.

*Yet again another accident last evening on the B1456 in the 60 mile an hour stretch.*

*RTA 332/1/06/23*

*Two vehicle collision at junction of Bylam Lane and B1456 7pm approx Both drivers requiring medical assistance road side.*

The other incident looked to be a single vehicle heading towards Shotley, left road on bend, crossed west bound carriageway left tyre tracks on verge before scrapping along the wall of Walnut Tree Farm outbuilding. Pretty much same scenario as the latest accident at Walnut Tree? I have attached photos of this accident.

Yes, please do use my emails.

**Sent:** Saturday, January 27, 2024 at 5:21 PM  
**From:** "west73" <west73@btinternet.com>  
**To:** woolverstonepc@gmx.co.uk  
**Subject:** B1456

Hi Simon,

Have emailed you two emails sent to our local councillor.

Since both of these incidents, a car has narrowly missed the fence erected by Mr and Mrs Pryke , owners of Walnut Tree Farmhouse, ploughed through their boundary fencing striking a corner of their outbuilding with sufficient force as to bring down one end of their building. Have you contacted them for their input?

I have had eight vehicles over the years breach the fencing to my paddocks. I can recall 14 accidents involving vehicles in the stretch from Bylam Lane to the 30mph zone at west of Chelmondiston. Some of these have, thankfully, incurred no serious injuries so my guess is not all have been recorded. The speed limit reduction must surely be considered for the entire section of road from Chelmondiston to Woolverstone. The speed calculator gives the difference of between 60mph and 40mph at 32 secs for a distance of 1.7klms. Worth it to avoid the risk of an accident. In addition to the 7 properties in Woolverstone access to join the the main B1456 is required at the BT sub station, Bylam Lane, Walnut Tree Farm, the track serving properties to Park Tree farm and beyond, farm vehicle access to the fields either side of the B1456, Richardson Lane and rear entrance to a property in Mill Lane. In addition to having very poor forward vision going through these bends, very few drivers remain on the correct side of the centre white line when driving in excess of 40 miles an hour.

As you have recorded , wildlife is often a victim of this road.

While traffic is mainly cars and vans , an increasing number of HGV's use the road. I often see them turning into Lings Lane for the industrial units at Harkstead perhaps? HGV's are delivering building materials to Ganges Barrelman's site and the 23 houses being erected Spalding Way Chelmondiston and also by local farmers. These in particular, cannot/do not remain on a correct side of the road in the bends at Chelmondiston.

Surely it is far more realistic to hope for vehicles entering the villages at 30 mph coming down from 40 mph than from 60 mph.

I sincerely hope you can achieve a speed reduction for this section of the B1456. For me it is a no brainer, can't fathom why not already in place, especially as 40mph was appropriately imposed for the B1456 down to Shotley Gate.

Regards Janet West

**From:** west73 <west73@btinternet.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 2, 2023 7:55 AM  
**To:** Simon Harley (SCC Councillor) <Simon.Harley@suffolk.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Chelmondiston Parish Council <clerk@chelmondistonpc.info>  
**Subject:** RE: RTA's B1456 Chelmondiston to Woolverstone.

Hello Simon,

Yet again another accident last evening on the B1456 in the 60 mile an hour stretch.

RTA 332/1/06/23

Two vehicle collision at junction of Bylam Lane and B1456 7pm approx Both drivers requiring medical assistance road side.

Since our last communication in February an out building has been damaged at Walnut Tree Farm on this section of the road. The owners have now erected their own fencing as this is at least the third occasion vehicles have left the road here.

Are highways any further with a change to the speed limit on this section of the B1456?

I have copied in the clerk of Chelmondiston Parish Council as this matter, directly affects Chelmondiston also.

Thank You Mrs Janet West

**From:** west73 <west73@btinternet.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 16, 2023 12:33 PM  
**To:** Simon Harley (SCC Councillor) <Simon.Harley@suffolk.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RTA's B1456 Chelmondiston to Woolverstone.

Dear Simon,

There has in the last 15 hrs been a second accident **this week** in bends going into Chelmondiston on the B1456.

I own the paddocks on the corner of Bylam Lane and have over the last 10 years noticed an alarming rise in the accidents on this stretch of the road forming the 60 mile an hour limit.

I really feel now is the time to lower the speed limit here on the section between Chelmondiston and Woolverstone before a fatal accident occurs.

Can you tell me why this section was not included in the 40 mph a while ago? How many accidents do there need to be before highways will consider a change? I can recall 10 in the last five years.

I have studied the requirements on Suffolk Highways website and they say that a request must be made through office. Has this been done previously?

I would appreciate your help in getting this matter put forward to highways.

Yours sincerely

Janet West

12 Woodlands IP9 1DT

On 6 Feb 2024, at 17:58, sally williamson <sallywilliamson@hotmail.co.uk> wrote:

On 22nd January 2024 at approximately 1710 hrs I was travelling on the B1456 between Woolverstone and Chelmondiston. I was travelling in the national speed limit section but driving at approximately 40mph. There were cars in front of me and behind.

As I approached the straightest section of the road, where the fields are open to the carriageway I was struck on my front off side corner by a large deer which jumped from the hedgerow. At no point was the deer in front of me so I was not afforded the time to react. I am a frontline police response officer so am trained to drive at high speeds and react quickly to hazards.

I was brought up in Chelmondiston so am used to driving on rural roads and am familiar with the likely obstructions. I believe that as the area becomes more developed and more vehicles use the roads the speed limits need to be reconsidered in order to protect road users and wildlife.

60mph on a bendy, rural, unlit road with known deer to inhabit the local fields is no longer safe or appropriate.

My car was damaged beyond repair and the financial and emotional toll has been massive. Had I been driving any faster I believe I would have been injured. The aftermath of the incident very nearly led to further RTCs as people driving at high speed swerved to avoid my vehicle in one lane and subsequently the deer laying in the other lane.

I urge the speed limit on this small section to be reconsidered, affording people the luxury of a greater reaction time therefore reducing incidents with vehicles and wildlife before any more are seriously hurt or killed. By having such a small section of road at national speed limit between two sections of 30mph restrictions inadvertently appears to encourage drivers to drive at excess speed in the naive belief that it is safe to do so. Should the limit be altered to 30 or 40mph I believe that road users would complete a safer steadier journey without intermittent acceleration and deceleration.

Yours,

Sally Gooding

**From:** Paul Gooding <pjgooders@hotmail.co.uk>

**Date:** 6 February 2024 at 09:28:30 GMT

**To:** info@power-jet.net

**Subject:** Road

Pete,

As requested photos of our car following a deer running out in front of Sally. This happened on 22nd Jan, between Woolverstone and Chelmondiston in the national speed limit area. Luckily she was only doing 40mph otherwise I feat this would have been a lot worse. As you know I am a police officer so often travel along this road at all times of day and night and have seen many deer on these road. They are often in the fields around the houses so you really have to be careful along this stretch. Travelling at 60mph would give very little reaction time if a deer was to run into the road. We also live on the edge of the village on the main road so have to cross our children over to go to school. The traffic is getting heavier and so many people do not adhere to the speed limits. Being in the country Police do not often get chance to patrol these areas so drivers believe they can travel at whatever speed they like. Reducing the road between the villages to 40mph would greatly reduce the chance of accidents and help to keep our roads safer.

Best regards

Paul Gooding