

Review of Speeding Through the Village on A683

Introduction

Following the Casterton Parish Council (CPC) meeting on 9th January 2024, at which the question of excessive speeding was raised, Councillor Humphris asked me if I would prepare a paper on the subject for the CPC.

For a number of years, ending in late 2022, I represented IAM RoadSmart (previously known as the Institute of Advanced Motorists) on the Cumbria CRASH Committee (Crash Reduction And Safer Highways). This is a multi-agency monthly meeting that looks at causes and possible solutions to reduces road traffic collisions (RTC). Councillor Humphries was aware of my involvement in this and that I would have contacts in the Cumbria Police and South Lakeland Highways Department, who may be able to give me information that is not readily available to CPC. Also, I live on the A683 close to the Parish Church that is within the section of the road causing parishioners' concern.

Concerns of Parishioners

My understanding of the area of primary concern is south from the road crossing by the Church, which carries the public right of way and is used extensively by pupils and staff of Sedbergh Casterton Preparatory School (the School), to southern end of Town End Garages forecourt. Emphasis of concern is on the pinch point between the garden wall of Casterton Terrace and the Pheasant Inn, where pedestrians are in close proximity to moving vehicles, due to the fact there is no footpath either side of the road.

Traffic Speed Control Measures in Place

The physical nature of pinch point itself and the traffic warning signs, Road Narrows, in both directions, will encourage motorists to slow down.

The Cumbria Safety Cameras are operated by the Police and are deployed in Casterton to the north of the Church on the verge next to the School's playing field. They are deployed in the busier periods of the year between Easter and October, when traffic volumes are higher due to tourists and motorcyclists. You are aware that the A683 is a popular road for motorcyclists, and you are aware of the high numbers who congregate at Devil's Bridge.

In the past two years, 2022/23, the camera van has deployed on 12 (twelve) occasions and has only issued 7 (seven) Notices of Intended Prosecution (NIPs). This would indicate that there is not a significant speeding issue through that part of the Village, as far as the War Memorial. These camera vans, as I understand, can detect speeding in both directions, simultaneously. The locations to which a camera van is deployed is based on the evidence of excessive speed in a particular area.

Historical Empirical Evidence

In 2018 this same issue was raised by residents to the CPC, and at that time I was attending the CRASH meetings. I took a formal request from the CPC to the CRASH Committee requesting deployment of speed data monitory equipment in the Village. The equipment was deployed at the point of the Road Narrows traffic sign just south of the Village Hall and measured the speed of the traffic in both directions. It was deployed for 7 (seven) days between 9th October and 15th October 2018, inclusive.

In this period a total of 16,204 vehicles, in both directions, crossed the monitors. This was broken down into the following:

Cars & Vans	13,913
Light Goods Vehicles	1,493
Heavy Goods Vehicles	90
Coaches	77
Other (Motorcycle inc?)	631
Total	16,204

My assumption as motorcycles and cycles are not identified

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Summary of Speed

Average Speed of all vehicles was: **24.2 mph**

85% of fastest vehicles average speed was: **28.0 mph**

(This eliminates the slower vehicles e.g. bicycles, some farm vehicles, road sweepers, etc)

Vehicles within the current speed limit

2,020 vehicles were recorded between **15 to 20 mph**. (12.5% of total traffic flow)

6,535 vehicles were recorded between **20 to 25 mph**. (40.3% of total traffic flow)

6,211 vehicles were recorded between **25 to 30 mph**. (38.3% of total traffic flow)

Vehicles travelling between 30 to 35 mph

Total **938** (6.0% of total traffic flow)

Between critical hours of 0800 to 1800 **636** (3.8% of total traffic flow)

Vehicles travelling between 35 to 40 mph (Speeds at which a NIP* could be issued)

Total **69** (0.4% of total traffic flow)

Between critical hours of 0800 to 1800 **30** (0.2% of total traffic flow)

Vehicles travelling between 40 to 45 mph (Speeds at which a NIP* could be issued)

Total **5**

Between critical hours of 0800 to 1800 **1**

When looking at the higher speeds please remember that these may have been emergency service vehicles travelling with blue lights and two-tones activated. Kirkby Lonsdale emergency calls for an ambulance are regularly dispatched from Sedbergh.

The traffic monitoring equipment in use at that time could not differentiate between two wheeled and four, or more, wheeled vehicles. Therefore, motorcycles exceeding the current speed limit could not be identified from the data obtained.

Road Traffic Collisions (RTC)

The Police have informed me that in the last 5 (five) years there have been only 2 (two) reportable RTCs within the 30-mph limit of the Village. These were damage only RTCs, no injuries were suffered. From the map I have been given, one was just south of Town End Garage, the other in the area around the entrance to Casterton Hall. Neither were in the area of the parishioners' concern.

Current Risk Mitigation

The emphasis of concern is on the pinch point between the garden wall of Casterton Terrace and the Pheasant Inn, where pedestrians are in close proximity to moving vehicles, due to the fact there is no footpath either side of the road.

There is a footpath (not currently a Public Right of Way) from next to the Village Hall that emerges on Fern Croft, which is only, approximately, a 65 (sixty-five) metre longer walk from the Village Hall to Town End Garage, as against walking on the road at the aforementioned pinch point. There is no way, that I am aware of, to establish how many residents or visitors use either route.

*NIP = Notice of Intended Prosecution