STATEMENT OF REASONS

The Welsh Government introduced a national default 20mph speed limit for residential and restricted roads in Wales by the 17th of September 2023. In April 2024, the Welsh Government announced that 20mph limits would be reviewed. A national 'listening' exercise was launched as part of the review when members of the public were invited to share their views with local authorities about the specific roads where they felt the speed limit should be changed from 20mph back to 30mph.

As part of the "listening phase" of the 20mph review, Conwy Council received over 700 individual requests. Revised guidance on Setting 30mph Speed Limits was issued by Welsh Government in July 2024, together with an assessment tool to help local authorities in applying the guidance. Authorities were required to review requests for changes to the speed limit using the guidance and assessment tool.

Conwy Council have carried out detailed assessments for each of the 18 road sections proposed in this Order. The Welsh Government assessment tool was used as a framework for consideration of the evidence on road safety, traffic speeds, volumes and composition to exercise their judgement to ensure that speed limits are set in a way that promotes safety, efficiency, and community well-being. Proposed speed limit changes have been considered to take into account wider duties and statutory functions.

The criteria used to carry out assessments are

- Place

The 'Place' criteria states: "30mph would not be appropriate on sections of roads which may have significant demand for walking, wheeling and cycling" e.g. education settings, residential/retail premises, community/medical facilities, population density exceeds 20 properties per km immediately fronting the road.

All roads requested, that were changed to 20mph and were previously 30mph, were assessed under this criteria. Where local conditions meant roads failed to meet the criteria for a 30mph speed limit, no further assessment was required.

- Movement

The 'Movement criteria states that 30mph could be used on

a. strategic roads, such as those for freight or important bus corridors,
b. minor roads in industrial areas with low demand for pedestrian or cyclist traffic, or areas surrounded by open land

The Authority has statutory duties under section 16 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 to seek to secure the expeditious movement of traffic so far as practicable, and its duty under section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to seek to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic, including pedestrians, so far as practicable having regard to the matters specified in section 122(2). It has considered various criteria, including place, movement and road characteristics as set out in the Welsh Government guidance.

Conwy Council consulted with Public Transport Operators and obtained traffic data relating to the volume and composition of traffic using each road under review.

- Road Characteristics

Conwy Council assessed 'road characteristics' at road sections under review by considering;

a. Active Travel provision along the road and safe crossings for pedestrians and cyclists

b. Level of demand by pedestrians and cyclists to cross the road (e.g. where development is only on one side).
c. where the road has been designed so that the highway geometry and features support a higher safe speed of 30mph.
d. where the road is in a rural setting with low levels of development directly fronting the highway.

Assessments were carried out on site and using DataMap Wales' Active Travel mapping tool.

- Road Safety

Conwy Council assessed 'road safety' at each road section by comparing the Police recorded road traffic collisions data (STATS19) for a three year period prior to the implementation of the 20mph policy and provisional STAT19 data for the two years after implementation. The annual collision rate was calculated for comparison and where there has been a decrease of 1 casualty per year, a recommendation to retain the 20mph has been made.

Assessments also included writing to addresses that would be directly affected by a proposed change to the speed limit.

The road sections named in this Order have been identified as meeting the requirements (via the assessment process outlined above taking into account the revised guidance and the Authority's statutory duties) to change back to a 30mph speed limit. The assessment process concluded that the potential benefits outweigh the potential disbenefits of raising the speed limit.

The purpose of this Order is to enable the Council to complete the review process initiated by the Welsh Government and implement the changes to speed limits on roads in Conwy County Borough Council.