

**THE FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL (VARIOUS ROADS) (20MPH, 30MPH, 40MPH,
50MPH AND NATIONAL SPEED LIMITS.
RESTRICTED AND DERESTRICTED ROADS)
(B5444 WREXHAM ROAD, MAES GWERN, MOLD BUSINESS PARK AND FFORDD
NERCWYS, MOLD)
(30MPH SPEED LIMIT) (AMENDMENT NO. 9) ORDER 202-**

STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR PROPOSING TO MAKE ORDER

It is proposed to introduce a 30mph speed limit on the B5444 Wrexham Road, Maes Gwern, Mold Business Park and Ffordd Nercyws, Mold.

In May 2024, following the appointment of new Transport Minister Ken Skates, the Welsh Government announced a listening programme where they committed to work jointly with local authorities to prepare the ground for changes, revising the guidance on which local roads can be exempted from the default 20mph speed limit, which was introduced on restricted roads on the 17th September 2023.

Following Ken Skates' announcement, residents in Wales were urged to make representation to their local authorities for those roads they believed should return to 30mph. In excess of 1,000 individual requests were received to the Authority, following the launch of Welsh Government's Listening Programme. Each application received has been assessed taking into account Welsh Government criteria contained in 'Setting 30mph speed limits on restricted roads: guidance for highway authorities'.

In determining whether the speed limit should be raised to a 30mph speed limit on the above roads, the Authority has had regard to its statutory duties, including its duty 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, together with any additional local conditions deemed relevant.

In particular, its assessment noted the following.

Place criteria

Criteria

30mph would not be appropriate on sections of roads which may have significant demand for walking, wheeling and cycling, such as:

- a. within a 100m walk of any educational setting (e.g. nurseries, primary, secondary, further education and higher education)
- b. within 100m walk of any community facility
- c. within 100m walk of any medical facility, e.g. hospitals, GP surgeries etc
- d. where the number of residential and/or retail premises immediately fronting a road exceeds 20 properties per km.

Analysis

The identified section of roads, do not have significant demand for walking, wheeling and cycling. They do not have 20 or more properties immediately fronting the road. The B5444 has two properties. Maes Gwern has four properties. Ffordd Nercwys has five properties. Mold Business Park has six properties. Additionally, there are no educational, community, or medical facilities within 100 metres that would necessitate a lower speed limit. Therefore, based on these factors, a 30mph speed limit is appropriate for this section of road.

Criteria

In terms of 'place' criteria, 30mph limits could be used on:

- a. main or strategic roads outside city/town/village centres or high streets
- b. roads outside other high-density areas and away from other places that attract frequent pedestrian and/or cyclist trips.
- c. roads with very low density of housing and/or very few houses altogether (fewer than 20 properties per km)
- d. roads with residential and retail premises only on one side and no need to cross the road to access services or facilities (or if safe crossings are available or made available, as per Active Travel Act Guidance).

Analysis

The identified section of roads, meet the place criteria for a 30mph speed limit. The B5444 is a B classification road frequently used by buses and freight vehicles, making it a key transport corridor. Maes Gwern, Ffordd Nercwys and Mold Business Park are roads outside the town. The higher speed limit is appropriate given the road's function and its impact on traffic flow. Additionally, the criteria indicates 30mph limits may be used on main roads outside high-density areas or locations with frequent pedestrian and cyclist activity. There is also adequate footway provision throughout. Furthermore, this section previously operated as a 30mph limit without any concerns, demonstrating that it has functioned safely and effectively at this speed. Given these factors, reinstating a 30mph speed limit would support efficient transport while maintaining appropriate safety measures.

Movement

Criteria

In terms of 'movement' criteria, 30mph limits could be used on:

- a. strategic roads, such as those for freight or important bus corridors, where evidence exists that journey times have increased significantly since the speed limit was changed to 20mph
- b. minor roads in industrial areas with low demand for pedestrian or cyclist traffic, or areas surrounded by open land (excluding sports grounds, parks or playing fields that need to be accessed via said road).

Analysis

The identified section of roads, meet the place criteria for a 30mph speed limit. The B5444 is a B classification road frequently used by buses and freight vehicles, making it a key transport corridor. Maes Gwern, Ffordd Nercwys and Mold Business Park are roads outside the town. The reduction to 20mph has had a significant impact on journey times for some road users, particularly those reliant on efficient transport for freight and public transit.

Road characteristics

Criteria

In terms of 'road characteristics', 30mph limits could be considered:

- a. where there are segregated facilities (of sufficient width, as per Active Travel Act Guidance) along the road and safe crossings for pedestrians and cyclists (and/or these could be made available, in which case changes to the speed could be considered once in place). It will be necessary to separately consider the degree and quality of protection along (the footway/cycle track) and across the road (this would require safe facilities to be provided for pedestrians and cyclists which meet the Active Travel Act Guidance).
- b. where there is low demand (or no potential demand e.g. planned future trip generators) for pedestrians and cyclists to cross the road (e.g. 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.

Analysis

The identified section of roads, meet the movement criteria for a 30mph speed limit based on road characteristics. Cyclists have used the road safely in its current layout when it previously operated at 30mph without issue. Given these factors and the road's established history of safe operation at this speed, it is suitably equipped to support a higher speed limit while maintaining appropriate safety measures for all users.

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

The proposals are detailed in the Public Notice and are contained in the proposed Draft Order.

Dated this Friday 28th day of March 2025

KWilby

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