

Justification for the Introduction of a 20mph Speed Limit in Rushton Village

Submitted by: Rushton Parish Council Date: 25 June 2026

1. Introduction

Rushton Parish Council welcomes the recently adopted North Northamptonshire Council Speed Management Policy. Having read and understood the objectives of the policy we are suitably convinced that the core residential area of Rushton village meets the criteria set out for the implementation of a 20mph speed limit. Our conclusion is supported by clear evidence of risk, community concern and the need to protect vulnerable road users within a constrained rural village environment.

The intention of this document is to establish exactly what the process is for getting a 20mph speed limit implemented and who (contact details requested) at NNC the Parish Council need to work with in order to achieve this in the shortest possible timescale.

2. Policy Alignment

North Northamptonshire Council's Speed Management Policy emphasises:

- evidence-led decision-making based on mean speeds
- protection of vulnerable road users
- suitability of the road environment for lower limits
- residential character and community activity
- the importance of self-explaining, self-enforcing roads
- community engagement and local support

Rushton Village meets each of these criteria.

3. Characteristics of Rushton Village Supporting a 20mph Limit

3.1 Vulnerable Road Users

Rushton has a high proportion of vulnerable road users, including:

- children walking to and from school transport pick-up points
- older residents
- dog walkers and recreational users of the village's footpaths
- visitors to the Village Hall, recreation ground, and church

This often requires children to walk along and cross the road, frequently between parked vehicles, where no footways are available.

Pedestrian movements occur throughout the day, often in areas without continuous footways. The current 30mph limit does not provide sufficient protection given the village's constrained layout.

3.2 Constrained Road Environment

The village core is characterised by:

- narrow carriageways
- limited or absent footways

- several blind bends and restricted sightlines
- residential driveways with poor visibility
- parked vehicles creating pinch points

These features significantly increase the risk of conflict between vehicles and pedestrians. The road geometry is inherently incompatible with higher speeds.

3.3 Residential and Community Setting

Rushton is a compact rural settlement with:

- closely spaced housing
- primary school
- village hall
- recreation ground generating regular footfall
- public house and church
- network of informal walking routes

The village functions as a community hub and traffic speeds must reflect the residential nature of the environment.

3.4 School Start and Finish Time Congestion

At school start and finish times, traffic conditions in the village become extremely congested due to concentrated vehicle movements associated with school drop-off and pick-up activity. This leads to short periods of increased traffic volume, vehicles stopping or manoeuvring in constrained locations, and additional parking pressure on narrow roads. The layout of the footways also requires many children to cross the road between parked cars.

These conditions can obstruct visibility, create informal pinch points and increase the likelihood of conflict between vehicles, pedestrians and children travelling to or from school transport collection points.

This pressure is further intensified by the growing number of commuter vehicles travelling through the village as surrounding housing and commercial developments continue to expand, increasing the volume of through-traffic at peak times. The combined effect is a road environment that is less predictable and places added pressure on drivers to react safely in a restricted space, further strengthening the case for a 20mph limit at the times of day when vulnerable road users are most exposed.

3.5 Mean Speeds and Appropriateness

While mean speeds may not exceed the existing 30mph limit, they remain inappropriate for the physical environment and the level of pedestrian activity. National and local guidance recognises that a 20mph limit is justified where the road environment itself demands lower speeds for safety, even if recorded mean speeds are moderate.

3.6 Self-Enforcing Characteristics

The existing road layout already encourages slower driving. A 20mph limit would therefore be largely self-enforcing, consistent with the Council's requirement for "self-explaining roads" where the environment naturally supports compliance.

3.7 Community Support

Residents have consistently raised concerns regarding vehicle speeds, pedestrian safety, and near-miss incidents. The Parish Council is willing to support community engagement measures, including Speed Watch participation and awareness campaigns, to reinforce the proposed limit.

Engagement undertaken during the preparation of the Rushton Neighbourhood Plan identified speeding and traffic as the community's most significant concern.

4. Safety Rationale

The combination of narrow roads, limited footways, and vulnerable users creates a heightened risk profile.

A 20mph limit would:

- reduce stopping distances
- improve driver reaction times
- significantly lower the severity of any collision
- increase driver awareness of pedestrians and cyclists
- create a safer environment for all road users

This aligns with national evidence demonstrating the safety benefits of 20mph limits in rural villages with similar characteristics.

5. Conclusion

Rushton Village clearly meets the criteria set out in North Northamptonshire Council's Speed Management Policy for the introduction of a 20mph speed limit. The village's constrained road layout, high presence of vulnerable users, residential character and strong community support provide a robust and evidence-based justification for the proposed change.

The Parish Council therefore requests that the relevant contacts at North Northamptonshire Council be informed of this request and that they make contact with Cllr Mike Brightman to arrange an initial meeting in person to create a project plan that will see this vital road safety improvement put in place.

This initiative is supported by our Ward Councillors.

We look forward to building a partnership with relevant colleagues at NNC.