



### 6.3 VILLAGES

111. Fear of traffic can affect people's quality of life in villages and it is self-evident that villages should have comparable speed limits to similar roads in urban areas. It is therefore government policy that, where appropriate, a 30 mph speed limit should be the norm in villages.
112. Traffic Advisory Leaflet 01/04 (DfT, 2004) sets out current policy on achieving lower speed limits in villages, including a broad definition of what constitutes a village. For the purpose of applying a village speed limit of 30 mph, a definition of a village can be based on the following simple criteria relating to frontage development and distance:
  - 20 or more houses (on one or both sides of the road); and
  - a minimum length of 600 metres.
113. If there are just fewer than 20 houses, traffic authorities should make extra allowance for any other key buildings, such as a church, shop or school.
114. The above criteria should give an adequate visual message to drivers to reduce their speed. However, many drivers are unlikely to reduce their speed to the new 30 mph limit if it is over a very short stretch of road, particularly if the end of the limit can be seen at the entry point. It is therefore recommended that the minimum length is at least 600 metres to avoid too many changes in speed limits along a route. Traffic authorities may, however, lower this to 400 metres when the level of development density over this shorter length exceeds the 20 or more houses criterion and, in exceptional circumstances, to 300 metres. Shorter lengths are, however, not recommended.
115. In some circumstances it might be appropriate to consider an intermediate speed limit of 40 mph prior to the 30 mph terminal speed limit signs at the entrance to a village, in particular where there are outlying houses beyond the village boundary or roads with high approach speeds. For the latter, traffic authorities might also need to consider other speed management measures to support the message of the speed limit and help encourage compliance so that no enforcement difficulties are created for the local police force. Where appropriate, such measures might include a vehicle-activated sign, centre hatching or other measures that would have the effect of narrowing or changing the nature and appearance of the road.
116. Where the speed limit commences at the village boundary, the village nameplate sign and speed limit roundel may be mounted together using the format prescribed in diagram 2402.1 of TSRGD. The combined sign should be located as near as practicable

to the start of the development, so that drivers see housing at the same time as the signs, reinforcing the visual message for reduced speed.

117. If there are high approach speeds to a village, or the start of the village is not obvious, village gateway treatments can also be an effective way to slow drivers down. Further guidance on the use of gateway and entry treatments is included in Appendix B of this guidance. Advice can also be found in Traffic Advisory Leaflets 13/93 *Gateways* (DoT, 1993a), 01/94 *VISP – A Summary* (DoT, 1994a) and 01/04 *Village Speed Limits* (DfT, 2004).
118. In situations where the above criteria for a village are not met and there is a lesser degree of development, or where engineering measures are not practicable or cost-effective to achieve a 30 mph limit, but a reduction from the national 60 mph speed limit is considered appropriate, traffic authorities should consider alternative lower limits of 40 or 50 mph.
119. It may also be appropriate in some larger villages to consider 20 mph limits or zones, or Home Zones if lighting and other considerations allow. Such limits should not, however, be considered on roads with a strategic function or on main traffic routes.