

**The Essex County Council (A414 Harlow/Chelmsford, and
Various Side Roads) (Speed Limits) Order 202***

Statement of Reasons

The purpose of this Order is to improve road safety by permanently reducing speed limits along a 14.5-mile section of the A414 between Widford Roundabout, Chelmsford, and the existing 30mph limit east of the junction with the B181 at Tylers Green.

This proposal follows a sustained and unacceptable history of fatal and serious injury collisions on this corridor. Since 1 January 2021, the route has been the location of 12 fatal collisions resulting in 13 fatalities; 14 serious injury collisions, and 46 slight injury collisions, leading to a total of 120 casualties. This level of harm is significantly higher than would normally be expected on a Primary Route of this nature and demonstrates an urgent need for intervention to improve safety for all road users.

Prior to the introduction of temporary measures, the route was subject to a combination of 30mph, 50mph and national speed limit (60mph) restrictions. This variation in speed limits created an inconsistent driving environment and contributed to higher vehicle speeds on rural sections where the severity of collisions has been greatest.

In September 2025, a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) was introduced on an emergency basis to address the immediate road safety concerns. The measures reduced sections previously subject to the national speed limit to either 50mph or 40mph, reduced existing 50mph sections to 40mph, and retained the existing 30mph and 40mph limits. These measures were implemented in response to exceptional safety concerns and the urgent need to reduce the risk of further fatal and serious collisions.

Evidence consistently demonstrates that lower vehicle speeds reduce both the likelihood of collisions occurring and the severity of the resulting injuries. Reduced speeds provide drivers with greater time to react to hazards, shorter stopping distances and improved opportunities to avoid conflicts. Where collisions do occur, lower impact speeds significantly reduce the risk of death and serious injury.

The proposed permanent speed limits will provide a more consistent and predictable speed environment along the route, helping to reduce collision risk, minimise the severity of collisions, and improve overall safety for all road users. The measures support wider road safety objectives and are considered a proportionate response to the exceptional collision record of this section of the A414.

The making of this Order is therefore considered necessary to prevent danger to persons using the road and to reduce the likelihood and severity of future collisions. Approval is sought to make the current temporary speed limit reductions permanent in the interests of public safety. The scheme is being funded by the Casualty Reduction Capital budget and is strongly supported by the Head of Roads Policing at Essex Police.