South Petherwin Parish Council: Mobile Speed Activation Signs Policy

Introduction

Mobile Speed Activation Signs (MSAS) are temporary sign installations that alert road users to the speed at which they are travelling along a given stretch of the highway. They represent one of a number of tools introduced to tackle inappropriate speeds and encourage safer driving. MSAS detect the speed of oncoming traffic using a radar device and may indicate the vehicle speed or the speed limit.

The demand for interactive signing is increasing on the highway network as the local community continues to be concerned about the perceived, and actual, number of vehicles that drive too fast through their villages.

In 2026, South Petherwin Parish Council purchased 2 mobile MSAS, which have been erected by Cornwall Council. Ongoing these will be maintained by the Parish Council, and more may be purchased.

Choosing locations

There are no legislative powers for Parish Councils under the Highways Act to erect these signs on the highway therefore permission will have to be sought from Cornwall Council prior to erection at each location.

The following requirements for MSAS sites MUST be met:

- The posted speed limit must be 20, 30 or 40mph.
- The site must be inside the speed limit and the MSAS unit must not be placed upon the entry sign to the speed limit.
- There must be adequate forward visibility. It is recommended that in a 20mph speed limit this is a minimum of 60m, and in a 30mph speed limit this is a minimum of 90m, and in a 40mph speed limit this is a minimum of 120m.
- MSAS should not be used in such close proximity to a speed limit change that would result in the sign activating at vehicles outside the relevant speed limit.
- The MSAS unit must not obscure visibility of another traffic sign.
- The MSAS unit must not obscure visibility from any access or junction.
- The post/street furniture on which the MSAS unit is to be deployed must be safely accessible and in a good condition. Cast iron or ornate lamp columns, power supply or telephone poles, and private posts must not be used.
- The MSAS unit must not obstruct a footway, cycle track or verge on which pedestrians walk. Where the MSAS unit is sited over a footway then a mounting height of at least 2.1m is required. If sited over a cycle track, then a mounting height of at least 2.4m is required.
- The MSAS unit, including its face, must have at least 450mm clearance from the edge of the carriageway, 600mm if sited on a central island.
- MSAS cannot be used within 250m of a static Vehicle Activated Speed Sign that is already operating in the same direction on the same section of route.
- MSAS should be located away from junctions and complex road layouts to avoid driver distraction.
- The council will aim to move the signs as required to preserve their effectiveness.

- **Locations will be selected**
- By Parish Council proposals
- On recommendation from Cornwall Council
- On recommendation from Devon & Cornwall Police
- By resident/Community Speed Watch feedback given to the Clerk

Permission needs to be sought of homeowners if the position of the poles is on their property, or affects them in any way, and other local residents should be consulted.

Installation

Any equipment placed on the Highway has to be installed safely and must not put Highway users at risk. Where installation is not undertaken by Cornwall Council or their contractor, it is recommended that Community Road Warden training is undertaken.

The speed threshold activation limit will be set by Cornwall Council.
Equipment bought directly should be assessed for **reliability**, particularly with regard to the environmental conditions (particularly salt air) which affect the longevity of equipment, **compliance with UK standards** and **maintenance/installation** considerations. Town and Parish Councils should ensure signs are erected, maintained and removed in accordance with their risk assessments and method statements.

Data

The Clerk will manage all data and provide a report to the Parish Council after each installation cycle. This report will also be placed on the Parish Council's website.
All data that indicates speeding at a site will be shared with Devon & Cornwall Police, Highways, Cornwall Councillors and the local Community Speed Watch team.

Reference: Cornwall Council Mobile Sped Activation Signs (MSAS) Guidance Note, June 2025

Adopted: Parish Council meeting 11th November 2026