

	<p>REGULATION 28 REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS</p> <p>THIS RESPONSE IS BEING SENT TO:</p> <p>1. The Assistant Coroner for Cumbria, Mr Paul O'Donnell of 65 Duke Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria LA14 1RW in response to a 'Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths' received following an inquest hearing into the death of Doreen Fell, that concluded on 20 February 2019.</p>
1	<p>HIGHWAYS ENGLAND</p> <p>I am [REDACTED], Regional Director (North West Region), responding on behalf of Jim O'Sullivan, Chief Executive of Highways England Company Limited of Bridge House, 1 Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, SURREY, GU1 4LZ.</p>
2	<p>CORONER'S MATTERS OF CONCERN</p> <p>The MATTERS OF CONCERN are as follows:–</p> <p>a. The application of the national speed limit (60mph) for this single carriageway section of the A590 Trunk road as it passes through the village of Backbarrow and how it impacts on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Reaction times for pedestrians ii. Reaction times for drivers iii. The size of gap in traffic required to execute a safe pedestrian crossing; <p>b. The lack of street lighting on this section of the A590 Trunk road;</p> <p>c. The safety of pedestrians crossing this section of the A590 Trunk road with particular emphasis on users of the Backbarrow village hall and primary school; and</p> <p>d. The lack of signage in the vicinity of this section of the A590, and the village of Backbarrow, to advise pedestrians of an alternative route across the A590 Trunk road via an underpass 500m to the south of the accident location.</p>
3	<p>DETAILS OF ACTION TAKEN OR PROPOSED TO BE TAKEN, OR AN EXPLANATION AS TO WHY NO ACTION IS PROPOSED</p> <p>As requested by the Coroner in his Regulation 28 Report dated 22 February 2019, Highways England have reviewed the speed limit, the street lighting, the safety of pedestrians and the provision of signing to the underpass at the location of the accident on 17 January 2018.</p> <p>a. National speed limit</p> <p>The Department for Transport Circular 01/2013 <i>Setting Local Speed Limits</i> advises that speed limits should reflect the function of the road and its environment. They should also reinforce people's assessment of what is a safe speed to travel. The A590 is part of the Strategic Road Network and as such its primary function is to cater for through traffic between the M6 motorway and Barrow-in-Furness. Whilst the A590 trunk road bisects the village of Backbarrow into two distinct sections, practically none of the village itself fronts directly onto the road. The western and eastern sides of the village are accessed via two junctions situated to the north and south of the pedestrian refuge island. Much of the village is screened from the A590 by trees and the only frontage development is a small parking area to the rear of Brow Edge Road and the driveway to South Lakes Boarding Kennels. We therefore consider that the national speed limit of 60mph is appropriate for this stretch of the A590 and is consistent with current guidance.</p> <p>The circumstances of death recorded in the Regulation 28 Report state that it would take</p>

a pedestrian, walking at an average speed for a lady aged 60+ of 1.25 metres per second, 3.04 seconds to cross the northbound carriageway. The A590 is a high standard single carriageway road which runs from north to south through the valley on a relatively straight alignment and gentle gradients for approximately 1 kilometre. There is at least 300 metres clear visibility in each direction at the pedestrian refuge, a distance which would take approximately 11 seconds for a vehicle travelling at the speed limit to cover. This would allow plenty of time for a waiting pedestrian to make a decision and then cross the road safely. Furthermore, this provides more than adequate visibility for an approaching driver travelling at the speed limit to react safely and appropriately to a pedestrian crossing the road.

b. Street lighting

The A590 is unlit throughout the National Park area with the exception of the major roundabout junctions at Meathop, Newby Bridge and Greenodd. The pedestrian refuge itself contains a base lit bollard and high-level beacon on either side which highlights the refuge to approaching motorists. The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges document TA 49/07 which covers the appraisal of new lighting on the trunk road network states that the role of road lighting as a safety benefit has limitations and should be considered alongside measures with less adverse environmental impact. It should not be used to mitigate a high darkness collision record unless an investigation carried out by a qualified Road Safety Engineer indicates this would be the best solution. In this case there are a low proportion of collisions in the dark (section c. below) which does not support the installation of street lighting at this location.

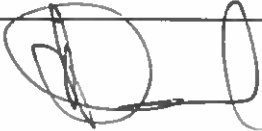

c. Safety of pedestrians crossing A590

We have reviewed the safety record for this stretch of the A590 through Backbarrow including particular analysis from a pedestrian's perspective. Over the previous 10 years, up to the accident on 17 January 2018, there have been seven personal injury collisions over the 1km section. All of the previous collisions were classified as 'slight injuries'. None of the previous collisions involved pedestrians and none were directly attributed to excessive speed. Only one of the seven collisions occurred during the hours of darkness where a single vehicle lost control and left the carriageway in the middle of the night for no documented reason. Most of the collisions have occurred at the junctions on either side of the refuge and involved turning vehicles or shunt type collisions in slow moving traffic. Our analysis found that the current speed limit and lack of street lighting have not been detrimental to road safety as the A590 passes through Backbarrow. Combined with the lack of frontage development mentioned above, and the low number of collisions in the hours of darkness, our review has concluded that lighting this stretch of the A590 would not be appropriate or beneficial.

d. Signage of the pedestrian underpass

The presence of local facilities on both sides of the village means that there is likely to be significant pedestrian demand to cross the A590 and there are two available options for this; the pedestrian refuge in question and an alternative underpass to the south. There are continuous footways on both sides of the A590 between the refuge and the underpass. The footpaths to the underpass are signed from both bus laybys on the A590 and on both sides of the village where connecting footpaths meet local roads. We have identified that one of the signposts at the southbound bus layby is currently missing its sign. Although our records show that these public footpath signs are not Highways England's, we are investigating their ownership to have the missing sign replaced at the earliest opportunity.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that the ramps leading to the underpass are lit where they run away from the carriageway, and the lighting in the underpass itself was upgraded last year to modern standards. The most direct pedestrian route between the eastern side of the village and the primary school is via the pedestrian underpass. With reference to signing the underpass from the pedestrian refuge as an alternative crossing point, the distance there and back would involve walking approximately half a mile and

	<p>we do not consider that pedestrians would realistically walk this distance rather than use the refuge. Both the refuge and underpass are likely to be used primarily by local people who would already be aware of the established routes to either crossing point. We therefore do not feel any additional signing to the underpass would be justified.</p>				
4	<p>TIMETABLE FOR ACTION</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Date</u></th> <th><u>Action</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Ongoing Tbc</td> <td>Investigate the ownership of the public footpath signs at the bus laybys. Arrange for the reinstatement the missing sign at the southbound bus layby.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Action</u>	Ongoing Tbc	Investigate the ownership of the public footpath signs at the bus laybys. Arrange for the reinstatement the missing sign at the southbound bus layby.
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5	<p>SAFETY OF ROAD USERS</p> <p>The safety of our road users is an imperative for our business in what we set out to achieve, and a core value of our organisation in how we go about it. Our company vision for safety is that “no one should be harmed when travelling or working on the strategic road network”. Any improvements we make must be done in a considered and controlled fashion so that the consequences of any improvements are fully understood, and any safety risks linked to proposed changes are eliminated or reduced as far as possible. Highways England’s review of this location has not identified any action, other than the reinstatement of a missing sign, as necessary at this time.</p>				
	<p>25 May 2019 Signed: </p>				
	<p> Regional Director on behalf of Jim O’Sullivan</p>				