



## **OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (ELMBRIDGE)**

### **LETTER OF REPRESENTATION – RYDENS ROAD, WALTON on THAMES**

**22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2008**

#### **KEY ISSUE**

To update members on the investigations carried out, the results obtained, the conclusions and recommendations made, following the presentation of a letter of representation to the June meeting of this committee.

#### **SUMMARY**

This report updates members following the letter of representation by Mrs. Evans at the June Committee, accompanied by a verbal presentation by Mr. David Humsworth highlighting concerns of speed and volume of vehicular traffic. A report to the Committee was agreed following further investigation. This report presents the results of those findings.

#### **OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Local Committee (Elmbridge) is asked to:

- (i) Note the report for information.
- (ii) Approve the installation of 2 Vehicle Activated Signs to be erected on suitable lamp columns on Rydens Road.

## 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Members are reminded that a letter of representation was submitted to the June 2008, meeting of the Local Committee, signed by 38 residents concerning speeding and volume of vehicular traffic along the D3830 Rydens Road.

- 1.1 The letter requested a lower speed limit, traffic calming, or a ban of heavy goods vehicles.
- 1.2 Rydens Road is the D3830, which is the main classified route running east to west, linking the A244 Hersham Road to the C153 Molesey Road, and is 1.8 Kilometers long.
- 1.3 The railway line also runs to the south of Rydens Road and there are only two location where vehicular traffic can cross this railway line, one being under the railway bridge on the A244 Hersham Road and the other under the smaller arched railway bridge on Molesey Road, adjacent to Hersham railway station.
- 1.4 Height restrictions are imposed on both bridges and whilst the higher at the A244 is 12'6" the lower on the Molesey Road is merely 10'6", and severely limits access from either side. Both bridges have recently been subject to bridge beam works by Railtrack as they are both prone to strikes by overheight vehicles.
- 1.5 Due to the environmental conditions of the surrounding area, with the rivers Mole/Ember bounding the East, railway line to the South, and reservoirs to the North and East, together with height restrictions imposed upon the two bridges, it does mean that vehicular traffic is very limited in its ability to access the area without utilising these limited routes.
- 1.6 The Molesey industrial estate resides on the Molesey Road, to the north of the Hersham railway station and a signed HGV route has been in existence for many years, which directs vehicles to this estate from the A244, due to these limitations explained above.
- 1.7 The road is subject to a 30mph speed limit and is well lit by a continuous system of street lighting. Pedestrian footways are provided on both sides of the road.
- 1.8 Whilst some of the side Roads have been traffic calmed over recent years, primarily to reduce personal injury accidents occurring, an important aim of the scheme was to remove vehicular rat running from those roads lower on the hierarchy, and return them to the primary route network.
- 1.9 It was for this reason that Rydens Road was not treated for traffic calming as it is the primary route through the area and directs vehicles

to the Industrial estates. Any traffic calming would be very intrusive and intensely noisy due to the types of vehicles it carries. Additionally the personal injury accident record along Rydens Road did not justify any proposals.

- 1.10 The Elmbridge Casualty Reduction Working Group convenes twice a year to assess locations where 2 or more personal injury accidents occur in any 12 month period. The Group consists of Officers from the Casualty Reduction Group, Road Safety officers, Surrey Highways, Surrey Police, Surrey Fire & Rescue. The group automatically investigates fatal accidents, once the details and any contributory factors are available from the Police.
- 1.11 Although Surrey County Council as the highway authority introduce traffic calming, it does so in accordance with Government aims to reduce personal injury accidents by 40% by 2010. It is only fair and equitable that this is done where high numbers of personal injury accidents are occurring ahead of locations where there are few, or even perceived accidents, in order to best utilise its very limited funding.
- 1.12 Speeding is essentially a Police enforcement issue as driving in excess of the posted speed limit is a criminal offence, for which the Police as the sole highway enforcement agency, have powers to deal with offenders to unashamedly flaunt the law, quickly and effectively.

## **2 ANALYSIS**

- 2.1 It is proposed to erect two Vehicle Actuated Signs (VAS), one in each direction on existing lamp columns, at strategic locations in consultation with Surrey Police, to best remind drivers of the obligations to the law and road safety.

## **3 OPTIONS**

- 3.1 The road is subject to a 30mph speed limit, which is the appropriate limit for this type of road, and is the lowest limit than can be applied in Surrey, without traffic calming measures.
- 3.2 It is not possible to introduce heavy goods vehicle restrictions, as the road is the only primary route on the highway hierarchy able of accommodating such vehicles, due to the environmental characteristics of the location.
- 3.3 Furthermore the Police would not support such a move, as the enforcement of such a ban would be impossible.
- 3.4 Some of the side Roads have already been traffic calmed over recent years, primarily to reduce personal injury accidents occurring,

- 3.5 Rydens Road was not treated in order that the existing rat running traffic travelling through the areas lower hierarchy roads, generating accidents at inappropriate speeds, were returned to the more appropriate primary route network.
- 3.6 Any traffic calming introduced would be very intrusive and noisy due to the types of vehicles it carries, the residential nature of the road, and the closeness of properties to the highway. Additionally the personal injury accident record along Rydens Road did not justify such proposals.
- 3.7 With the advent of highway electronic devices such as Vehicle Actuated Signs, it has been possible to effect driver behaviour in a more effective fashion. The Interactive sign targets the offending drivers, who drive in excess of the posted limit, and displays the speed limit to them, together with a message to 'SLOW DOWN'.
- 3.8 These signs have proved very effective where used elsewhere in the Borough and have been well received by residents and drivers.
- 3.9 Police enforcement will be made easier as a reduction in the speed of the greater majority of drivers should be achieved, allowing them to target the more hardened driver.

#### **4 CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 The proposal is the result of a residents letter of representation. No further consultation has been carried out.

#### **5 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The estimated cost of the proposal is £6000, which County Councillor Mr Roy Taylor is proposing to fund from his allocation and the capital committee allocation subject to the approval of the Local Committee (Agenda Item 16).

#### **6 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 None.

#### **7 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 A handful of Vehicle Actuated Signs have been prone to vandalism, however the manufactures have been making improvements to the design to enable a more robust and vandal proof unit.

#### **8 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1 The report recommends the introduction of Vehicle Actuated Signs in order to reduce speeds and increase road safety in the area.

## 9 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The proposal would reduce vehicular speeds and simplify any Police enforcement subsequently required. It should also benefit pedestrian safety and encourage walking/cycling by creating a greater confidence and safer environment for more vulnerable users.

## 10 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 10.1 If the Committee agree with the recommendations and approve the improvements the VAS units will be erected this financial year.

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### BACKGROUND PAPERS:

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