



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

**PETITION – A245 BYFLEET ROAD,
WEYBRIDGE**

8 DECEMBER 2008

KEY ISSUE

To update members on the investigations carried out, the results obtained, the conclusions and recommendations made, following the petition to the September meeting of this committee.

To seek approval to reduce the speed limit along the A245 Byfleet Road from the national speed limit (60mph) to 50mph from the existing 30 mph termination point 300 metres east of the B374 Brooklands Road to the traffic signals at the junction of the B365 Seven Hills Road.

SUMMARY

This report updates members following the petition received at the September Committee, accompanied by a verbal presentation by the lead petitioner, highlighting concerns of vehicular speed along the A245, but in particular following a recent fatality. 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) Include a scheme on next year's programme to reduce the speed limit on the A245 Byfleet Road.
- (ii) Approve, subject to statutory procedure, the speed limit on the A245 Byfleet Road be reduced from the national speed limit (60mph) to 50 mph from the existing 30 mph termination point 300 metres east of the B374 Brooklands Road to the traffic signals at the junction of the B365 Seven Hills Road.
- (iii) Approve that consideration and resolution of any objections received be delegated to the East Area Group Manager in consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman, together with Divisional Member.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Members are reminded that a petition was submitted to the September 2008, meeting of the Local Committee, concerning speeding of vehicular traffic along the A245 Byfleet Road.
- 1.2 The letter requested a 30 mph speed limit be applied to the road.
- 1.3 Byfleet Road is the A245, which is a strategic principal route on the County network linking the A3 trunk road at the Painshill interchange to the Borough boundary with Woking. The road in question is 2.0 km long and runs more or less east/west.
- 1.4 Due to the environmental conditions of the surrounding area, with the A3 trunk road to the east, St Georges Hill private estate to the north, Hotel and Golf Course to the south, vehicular traffic is very limited in its ability to access the area without utilising this route.
- 1.5 The road is currently subject to the national speed limit (60mph) and is well lit by a continuous system of street lighting. A continuous pedestrian footway is provided on the southern side of the road only.
- 1.6 The County Council database, supplied by Surrey Police, of personal injury accidents shows that between 1 January 2005 and 30 September 2008, there has been 26 personal injury accidents along this 2 km length of the A245, one of which was a fatal, the remainder slight injury accidents. None of the accidents recorded by Surrey Police were deemed as being speed related.
- 1.7 The Elmbridge Casualty Reduction Working Group convenes twice a year and 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.

- 1.8 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 who unashamedly flaunt the law, quickly and effectively.

2 ANALYSIS

- 2.1 The 85-percentile speed is a numerical average used by Highway Engineers to assess vehicular speeds, as it uses a mathematical standard distribution, resulting in a speed that 8 out of every 10 drivers achieve.
- 2.2 A permanent full time data recording station is sited on the A245 Byfleet Road, in the vicinity of the Silvermere Pet Cemetery. Data obtained from this shows that the 24 hour, monthly average 85-percentile speed of the Eastbound traffic along the road to be 41.6 mph, with a daily eastbound flow of 12,931 vehicles.
- 2.3 Similarly the West bound data shows that the 24 hour, monthly average 85%ile speed to also be 41.6 mph, with a daily westbound flow of 14,591 vehicles.
- 2.4 As these speeds are 24-hour monthly averages they are expected to be lower, as they are directly affected by the congestion that occurs along this route, in both directions, due to the high usage. This slow convoy effect does tend to determine the actual speeds of vehicles during certain times of the day, which would have a large speed reducing effect on average speeds spread over a longer period.
- 2.5 However the environmental nature of the road with its many peaks and troughs, create a natural reduction in vertical visibility, which appears to have a positive effect on driver behaviour throughout the remainder of the day, coupled with the constant volumes, as the spread of speeds throughout this period is not inordinately excessive.
- 2.6 The free flow speed of vehicles has also been recorded, utilising a radar speed gun. This is the average of at least 100 readings in each direction, taken of the lead vehicle in free flow, dry weather conditions. The covert survey was carried out on the 19th November 2008 between the hours of 11.30 and 13.00.
- 2.7 The data received from the survey reflects the speeds obtained from the permanent site recording eastbound 85-percentile speed of 40 mph and westbound 43 mph. The lowest speed recorded eastbound was found to be 27mph whilst the highest was 44mph. Similarly westbound was 27mph and 50mph.

3 OPTIONS

- 3.1 Surrey County Council has a speed management policy for determining and applying speed limits on the public highway. This was updated in 2005 to reflect the changes arising from the Department of Transport's revised speed limit guidance. This has been used to assess the limit on the A245 Byfleet Road.
- 3.2 The road is currently subject to the national speed limit (60mph), and was assessed prior to 2005.
- 3.3 Surrey County Council's speed limit policy states:
- “that where the preferred new limit is lower than the existing limit, existing speeds will need to be compared to the proposed new limit to check if they are close enough for the new limit to be successfully introduced on its own, or whether other supporting speed reducing measures will be required.”
- 3.4 Experience has shown that lowering a speed limit on its own will not necessarily reduce speeds sufficiently. If a speed limit is set much lower than the existing traffic speeds then motorists are likely to ignore the limit unless the character of the road or environment indicate otherwise. There are likely to be insufficient police resources to provide effective enforcement for locations where speed limits are unrealistic.
- 3.5 If the average speeds are substantially above the proposed speed limit then the options are either to:
- (i) Retain the existing higher speed limit in order to manage speeds at a realistic level or:
 - (ii) Implement other speed management measures to achieve speeds closer to the preferred limit, and then introduce the lower limit.
- 3.6 Any proposed changes in speed limit should be undertaken in consultation with Surrey Police, as they will have the responsibility for the enforcement of the new speed limit.
- 3.7 In rural areas the default national speed limit on single carriageway roads is 60mph, however in villages with extensive roadside development, it is Surrey County Council (SCC) policy that the speed limit should be the same as the standard limit in an urban area (30 mph). In order to be classified as a village for 30mph speed limit assessment purposes, SCC guidance is that a settlement should have:-
- (i) At least 20 houses within 600 metres along its main road
 - (ii) A clear limit to its extent, characterised by a change in roadside frontage

(iii) Community facilities at its core e.g. shops, pub, church, green etc.

- 3.8 Other rural roads without extensive or partial roadside development are divided into Tier 1 and Tier 2 roads depending on their position within Surrey's Distributor Road Network
- 3.9 Tier 1 roads are primary roads consisting of trunk roads and main A-Class roads plus some important B-Class roads. These would have a preferred limit of 50 or 60 mph depending upon the rate of personal injury collisions per 100 million vehicle km. 50 mph for more than 35 and 60 mph for less than 35 personal injury collisions per 100 million vehicle km
- 3.10 Tier 2 roads are district distributors, local distributors and access roads. There are some A-class roads but these are mainly B, C, and unclassified D roads. These would have a preferred limit of 40 or 50 mph depending upon the personal injury collision rate per 100 million vehicle km. 40 mph for more than 60 and 50 mph for less than 60 personal injury collisions per 100 million vehicle km
- 3.11 Byfleet Road is classified as a Tier 1 road, and hence should have a preferred limit of either 50 mph or 60 mph, in accordance with the current policy. In addition when the calculation for personal injury collisions per 100 million vehicle km is undertaken this gives a figure of 46, which confirms the preferred limit for the road at 50mph.

4 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Consultation has been carried out with Surrey Police and their view is that they would support a reduction to 50 mph as it complies with the Joint traffic management strategy; however they have stated that they would not support a 30 mph and would object if a 30 mph limit were proposed, as it would not be the appropriate limit.

5 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The cost of making the Traffic Regulation Order and installation of the required signs will be in the region of £5,000. The funding for this scheme would have to be met from the 2008/9 Local Transport Plan funding.

6 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None.

7 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None.

8 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 A reduction in the speed limit of a Tier 1 category A-class principal route, to 30 mph, could not be considered under the current County policy.

8.2 A reduction in limit to 50 mph could be achieved, complies with the policy and would have the support of Surrey Police.

8.3 It is therefore recommended to reduce the maximum speed limit of the A245 Byfleet Road from its current national speed limit (60 mph) to 50 mph from the existing 30 mph termination point 300 metres east of the B374 Brooklands Road to the traffic signals at the junction of the B365 Seven Hills Road.

9 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Provision of a reduction in signed speed limit from the existing national speed limit (60 mph) to 50mph along the section location stated would meet the County Council's speed limit policy in terms of the measured average speeds and greatly assist the Police in enforcement of the motorists who are speeding. The reduction in speed limit and additional signing should assist in reducing the personal injury collisions.

10 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

10.1 If the Local Committee approves this speed limit reduction, a scheme will be included on the programme for 2009/10. Once funding is available, Surrey County Council's Legal Department will be asked to progress the Traffic Regulation Order. This will include a full consultation with the Emergency Services.

10.2 If no objections are received when the Traffic Regulation Order is advertised the 50mph Speed limit Traffic Regulation Order will be made and the relevant signs erected on site

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: Determining and applying speed limits
 Speed management policy

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