



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (ELMBRIDGE)

LETTER OF REPRESENTATION D6827 OAKEN LANE, CLAYGATE

7 DECEMBER 2009

KEY ISSUE

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

SUMMARY

This report updates members following the letter of representation received at the July Committee, highlighting concerns regarding the speed of traffic, discontinuous footways, and absence of pedestrian crossings along Oaken Lane, Claygate on which the lead petitioner spoke for three minutes. A report to the Committee was agreed following further investigation, and this report presents the results of those findings.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee Elmbridge is asked to:

- 1) Note the previous background and history and in particular that associated with the Wingham Court development.
- 2) Note the Vehicle Actuated Signs, previously erected along Oaken Lane.
- 3) Support further speed enforcement by Surrey Police along Oaken Lane and note the enforcement already carried out recently.
- 4) Agree the proposed works detailed in the report and support the conclusions and recommendations.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Members are reminded that a letter of representation was submitted to the July 2009, meeting of the Local Committee, highlighting concerns regarding the speed of traffic, discontinuous footways, and absence of pedestrian crossings along Oaken Lane, Claygate.
- 1.2 Oaken Lane is one of a limited number of entry points into Claygate due to the environmental conditions of the surrounding area, with the A3 trunk road enclosing the south and east, the railway line to the west, and with Telegraph Hill and Surbiton Golf Course to the north, vehicular traffic is very limited in its ability to access the area without utilising this route.
- 1.3 The letter together with presentation requested speed enforcement cameras, 20mph speed limits, traffic calming and chicanes, improved footways, and pedestrian crossings.
- 1.4 This section of road is currently subject to a 30 mph speed limit and is well lit by a continuous system of street lighting. Although pedestrian footways are provided on both sides of the road, they are however discontinuous.
- 1.5 Large yellow backed entry gateway signs displaying the mandatory speed limit signage, are located on all entry points into the Village. One is located on Oaken Lane in the vicinity of Manor Road South.
- 1.6 The County Council database, supplied by Surrey Police, of personal injury accidents shows that between 1 January 2006 and 31 July 2009, there have been 2 personal injury collisions along this section of road. Additionally, when the accident data was analysed further for the previous five years, so from 2001 to 2005, Oaken Lane was found to be completely accident free, which demonstrates that the collision rate over the last eight and a half years has been 2.

Location	Collisions	Date	Nature
Cavendish Drive	1	27/02/2009	Slight
Between Cavendish Drive & The Avenue	1	18/03/2006	Alcohol related
Entire length	0	1/1/2001 – 31/12/2005	None

- 1.7 Both the collisions that occurred were slight in nature and could have occurred anywhere on the network. One in 2006 involved a 3.5 tonne van which collided with a tree at 06.08 on a Saturday morning due to excess alcohol. The second in 2009, involved a light shunt whilst the lead vehicle was turning right into Cavendish Drive. Neither of these two accidents were reported by the police as involving excess speed.
- 1.8 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.
- 1.9 In the early 1990's, following the installation of cable TV ducts through much of Claygate by Nynex CableComms, the then Borough Councillor Hugh Ashton negotiated with the company to fund much of the traffic calming introduced in The Avenue and Aston Road/Cavendish Drive, together with the two mini roundabouts in the High Street, with raised road table between.
- 1.10 In 1995, the planning permission for the 3 storey, 83 bedroom, nursing home at Wingham, included a planning condition that a speed constraint measure be introduced at its junction with The Avenue, prior to the occupation of the development. This was negotiated again through Borough Councillor Hugh Ashton, who proposed to provide a new roundabout complete with new footways on the eastern side of Oaken Lane, to assist pedestrians.
- 1.11 Unfortunately due to much opposition from within the local community to the removal of a hedge, on the east side, due to it being classified an ancient hedgerow, precluded the ability to carry out the improved footway and crossing facilities. The development condition for this measure has now long expired. However and with this in mind a couple of years later the Gateway entry signs, complete with mandatory speed limit were introduced on Oaken Lane.
- 1.12 In 1999, on the west side however a much-needed sight line and footway improvement was successfully concluded outside number 30, on the corner of The Avenue, following the dedication of private land by the property owner.
- 1.13 In 2005, a Vehicle Actuated Sign (VAS) was erected on Oaken Lane, following requests from the Parish Council and the Scout leader on completion of the new scout building. The Parish Council and the Divisional Member funded this particular sign jointly.

- 1.14 Some 18 months ago another VAS was also erected at the other end of Oaken Lane, following discussions with the Parish Council, funded from a batch of new VAS proposed by the Local Committee's Local Transport Plan budget.
- 1.15 Although Surrey County Council, as the highway authority, introduce traffic management measures such as VAS and traffic calming, it does so in accordance with Government aims to reduce personal injury collisions by 40% by 2010. It is only fair and equitable that this is done where high numbers of personal injury collisions are regularly occurring ahead of locations where there are few, or even perceived accidents, in order to best utilise its very limited funding.
- 1.16 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 flaunt the law, quickly and effectively.
- 1.17 Surrey Police were again made aware of residents concerns, related to excess speed at a panel meeting in May this year. The Surrey Police Casualty Reduction Officer for Elmbridge, has attended on several occasions since the meeting to carry out speed enforcement. At the meeting Surrey Police did again offer their Speedwatch campaign equipment, however those who attended the meeting did not take up the suggestion.
- 1.18 Members of the Committee will be aware that Surrey County Council has recently launched the Drive Smart campaign whereby the leader, Dr Povey, has funded £1m from the 2009/10 budget towards improving police enforcement of anti social driving, which includes such things as driving in excess of the posted limit, non compliance with seat belt and mobile phone legislation, Speedwatch campaigns, to name just a few.

2 ANALYSIS

- 2.1 Two individual and independent types of speed surveys were carried out at the site. A radar gun survey on the 1 October 2009, and a seven-day full automatic traffic speed and volume survey at 2 separate locations during the period 13 October to 19 October 2009.
- 2.2 The 85thile 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.
- 2.3 One device was located at lamp column 28, just north of Oaken Drive, whilst the other at lamp column 18, just north of The Avenue.

Automatic Traffic Counter (mph)	Northbound 85%ile	Southbound 85%ile	Northbound mean	Southbound mean	Northbound daily Flow	Southbound daily Flow
L/C 28, just north of Oaken Drive	39	40.5	33.4	34.8	3151	2876
L/C 18, just north of The Avenue.	36.8	35.6	31.7	31.2	3757	3631

- 2.4 The data obtained from the first device showed that the northbound 85%ile speed of the traffic travelling along the road was 39 mph, with a 7-day average daily northbound flow of 3151 vehicles. The mean speed was 33.4 mph.
- 2.5 Southbound 85%ile speed of the traffic travelling along the road was found to be 40.5 mph, with a 7-day average daily southbound flow of 2876 vehicles. The mean speed was 34.8 mph.
- 2.6 The data obtained from the second device showed that the northbound 85%ile speed of the traffic travelling along the road was 36.8 mph, with a 7-day average daily northbound flow of 3757 vehicles. The mean speed was 31.7 mph.
- 2.7 Similarly southbound 85%ile speed of the traffic travelling along the road was also found to be 35.6 mph, with a 7-day average daily southbound flow of 3631 vehicles. The mean speed was 31.2 mph
- 2.8 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 1st October 2009 between the hours of 10.30 and 13.00.

Radar (mph)	Northbound 85%ile	Southbound 85%ile	Northbound mean	Southbound mean
Woodbourne Drive - Oaken Drive		38		33
Cavendish Drive – The Avenue	38		32	

- 2.9 The radar speed survey carried out determined that the northbound 85%ile speed of the traffic travelling along the road was 38 mph, with a mean speed of 32 mph.

2.10 Similarly the southbound 85%ile speed of the traffic travelling along the road was also 38 mph, with a mean speed of 33 mph.

2.11 Pedestrian counts were also carried out over a 10-hour period on the 28 October 2009, between 8.00 and 18.00. Two locations were assessed for pedestrians crossing Oaken Lane, 50m to the north of The Avenue and the other location 50m south of The Avenue. The details of which are summarised below.

Direction	East to West (North of The Avenue)							
Time	Adult			Children: School age & under			Prams / Disabled	Total
		With Cycles	Total		With Cycles	Total		
08:00 - 18:00	10	0	10	2	0	2	3	15
08:00 - 09:00	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
17:00 - 18:00	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1

Direction	West to East (North of The Avenue)							
Time	Adult			Children: School age & under			Prams / Disabled	Total
		With Cycles	Total		With Cycles	Total		
08:00 - 18:00	10	0	10	0	0	2	3	13
08:00 - 09:00	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
17:00 - 18:00	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

Direction	East to West (South of The Avenue)							
Time	Adult		Children: School age & under			Prams / Disabled	Total	
		With Cycles	Total		With Cycles			Total
08:00 - 18:00	33	0	33	12	0	12	1	46
08:00 - 09:00	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	4
17:00 - 18:00	7	0	7	0	0	0	0	7

Direction	West to East (South of The Avenue)							
Time	Adult		Children: School age & under			Prams / Disabled	Total	
		With Cycles	Total		With Cycles			Total
08:00 - 18:00	27	0	27	6	0	6	1	34
08:00 - 09:00	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
17:00 - 18:00	4	0	4	3	0	3	0	7

2.12 The following are details received from Surrey Police, related to enforcement carried out on Oaken Lane in recent months.

Date	Time at site	Results	Highest speed
21/05/2009	1 hour 10 mins	8 Warnings for excess speed.	39
22/05/2009	1 hour 5 mins	4 Warnings for excess speed. 1 ticket issued for seat belt offence	38
04/06/2009	30 mins	3 Warnings for excess speed.	38
14/07/2009	1 hour 10 mins	2 Warnings for excess speed.	39
24/08/2009	1 hour	6 Warnings for excess speed. 1 ticket issued for excess speed	43

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.
- 3.2 This section of road is currently subject to a 30 mph limit, 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 The following is an extract from the document, which refers to 20mph limits and zones specifically.

16. Regulations allow for two methods of introducing a 20 mph limit:
 - a) A 20 mph zone approach using speed limit (terminal) signs together with suitable traffic calming measures to provide a self-enforcing environment.
 - b) Use of speed limits only, indicated by terminal and repeater signs.
 17. DfT's Traffic Advisory Leaflet 09/99 advises that 20 mph zones would be particularly appropriate where there is a poor child safety record over an area, or where high concentrations of pedestrians and/or cyclists exist, or are anticipated. 20mph zones can help children walking and cycling to and from school, and may encourage children to walk or cycle.
 18. 20 mph zones should be implemented where there are excessive speeds, and where traffic calming measures would be needed to ensure average speeds are at, or below 20 mph.
 19. 20 mph speed limits by signs alone would be appropriate only where speeds are already low (average 20mph or less, 85%ile 24mph or less) and further traffic calming measures are not needed. (Refer to Surrey's Traffic Calming Policy and DfT's Traffic Advisory Leaflet 09/99 for more detail and design advice.)
 20. Local Distributor roads where the movement of traffic is important should have a 30 mph limit. Other, more strategically important roads such as dual carriageways may safely sustain a 40 mph limit. However it will be important to provide adequate facilities for pedestrians and cyclists at the same time as providing for faster, busier vehicle flows.
- 3.8 Traffic calming is known not to be universally popular with residents and drivers alike. Residents of The Avenue and Cavendish Drive are often requesting the removal of the existing measures from the highway. These requests from residents are replicated across the Elmbridge area where traffic calming has been used as a tool to reduce personal injury collisions. To prevent migration of speeding vehicles onto other less appropriate roads requires a greater area of coverage, which in turn increases cost.
- 3.9 The cost of introducing traffic calming is also very high, and this needs to be carefully balanced, against a background of limited Local Transport Plan (LTP) funds to finance these proposals, as the benefit cost of such schemes will undoubtedly be a factor. Priority for funding is aimed towards casualty reduction, and obviously with many high personal injury collision sites on the programme, awaiting treatment, this does inhibit locations where personal injury collision statistics are low.
- 3.10 LTP budgetary reductions over recent years has also exacerbated the highway authority's ability to treat as many locations annually and hence the programme has become much longer.
- 3.11 The current policy does not permit roads to be merely signed with a 20mph zone or limit without having first reduced the mean speeds down to this limit.

- 3.12 Paragraph 1.10 and 1.11 highlight previous problems associated with the environment to the east of Oaken Lane alongside the carriageway, which have stifled the implementation of improved pedestrian facilities.
- 3.13 These continue to be issues for which there does not appear to be a solution for, due also in part, to the narrow width of carriageway and the lack of available public highway to afford improvements to be carried out.
- 3.14 The carriageway to the south of Oaken Lane is also very narrow and will not facilitate the introduction of a pedestrian refuge island. It may be possible to provide some drop crossing and tactile paving at strategic locations to assist crossing the road, such as near the Bus Stops, at Woodbourne Way, together with another near Oaken Drive, leading to the footpath link to Torrington Road.
- 3.15 There are footpaths that run along the west side of Oaken Lane, to the north of The Avenue, away from the carriageway, are overgrown and require attention both by residents and the Highway Authority.
- 3.16 There is a walkway, on the west side, from where the highway footway terminates, near the bus stop opposite Woodbourne Way, which continues behind the dense foliage, to the front of the properties and continues south. This is very overgrown and for the most part impassable, however this does not form part of the public highway and the ownership of which is unknown.
- 3.17 The speed data collected clearly shows that the problem appears to be more one of excess speed rather than collisions, and hence it remains more appropriate to target drivers who are regularly driving in excess of the posted limit. Surrey Police have already commenced issuing warnings and fines, and a more sustained regime should have a positive outcome on speed reduction.
- 3.18 The funds from Surrey County Council towards the Drive Smart campaign should afford Surrey Police, greater ability to react to locations such as Oaken Lane in the future.
- 3.19 The Parish Council has usefully implemented Speedwatch previously, and this, together with Police action, will undoubtedly prove successful in achieving this speed reduction.

4 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Consultation has been carried out with Surrey Police and their view is that they would not support a reduction to 20 mph as it does not comply with the Joint Traffic Management Strategy, without physical changes to the road layout, to reduce the mean speeds to 20 mph.

- 4.2 There is also concern that the vehicles could migrate to other less appropriate residential roads if engineering measures were constrained to merely Oaken Lane.

5 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The cost of making a Traffic Regulation Order, removal of existing signs and posts, and the erection of new signs would be in the region of £4,500. The traffic calming required to ensure that the mean speeds along Oaken Lane are reduced to 20 mph is unknown at this stage as this would require detailed design and formal consultation; however this could be in the region of £75,000 to £90,000. The funding for this would have to be met from the Committees Local Transport Plan funding. This cost would rise as measures were introduced to other roads to mitigate the migration of vehicles to other routes.
- 5.2 Approximately £900 has been spent from this budget to carry out the data collection and analysis.

6 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None

7 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None.

8 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 All the data compiled for this report will be issued to Surrey Police to assist them in the enforcement of the posted limit in Oaken Lane.
- 8.2 The Elmbridge Maintenance Engineer will be asked to programme some community gang time, in consultation with the Divisional Member for Claygate, to cutting back foliage in Oaken Lane, to the north of The Avenue, and increase the available pedestrian width in many of the restricted locations.
- 8.3 The Community Highway Officer will additionally write to affected residents requesting that they cut back foliage overhanging the public footway.
- 8.4 The Elmbridge Maintenance Engineer will be asked to programme some community gang time, in consultation with the Divisional Member for Claygate, to provide drop crossing and tactile paving at strategic locations to assist crossing the road, such as near the Bus Stops, at

Woodbourne Way, together with another near Oaken Drive, leading to the footpath link to Torrington Road

9 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 To enable a positive and sustained vehicular speed reduction along the length of Oaken Lane through Police enforcement and the reintroduction of the Speedwatch campaign.
- 9.2 To improve pedestrian accessibility along Oaken Lane, through the removal of overhanging foliage, which currently obstructs pedestrian access.

10 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 10.1 If the Committee agree the recommendations then the data collected will be forwarded to Surrey Police to assist in their enforcement of the excess speed.
- 10.2 The Maintenance Engineer in consultation with the Divisional Member will agree the Community Gang works identified along Oaken Lane, and programme this into the schedule.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: Determining and applying speed limits
 Speed management policy

Version No. 01 Date: 5/11/2009 Time: 20:10 Initials: FRA No of annexes:0