



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

**PETITION RESPONSE  
OXSHOTT SPEED LIMITS & HGV RESTRICTION**

**19th September 2011**

**KEY ISSUE**

To provide Members with an Officer response to the petition submitted at the previous Local Committee Meeting, requesting reduction of speed limits and a HGV ban on the A244 Oxshott.

**SUMMARY**

A petition has been submitted by residents of Oxshott requesting a HGV ban for vehicles over 18T, a speed limit reduction to 20mph in the centre of the village and an extension of the 30mph restriction to the North and South of the village.

**OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Local Committee Elmbridge is asked to:

- i) note the contents of the report and consider the suggestions made when determining the 2011/12 Programme.

## 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.0 A Petition has been submitted to this Committee, signed by 566 signatories from the village. The full details are as follows:

**We, the undersigned, are asking the Local Committee to get the Highways Committee to implement the following:**

- 1) Ban HGVs over 18T from using the A244 through Oxshott by implementing a maximum weight limit, signs to be placed at the junction with A3 / A244 and Oaklawn / A244**
- 2) Implement a 20mph speed limit zone along Oxshott High Street from the junction with Birds Hill Rise to the junction with Fernhill.**
- 3) Extend the existing 30mph limit on the A244 south to the Junction with Oaklawn Road and north to the junction with the A3 and to equip terminator signs on both A244 approaches with Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) to aid enforcement.**

- 1.2 The A244, Oxshott is a key route in Surrey and provides an important access to highway users, particularly in peak times. The section in question links the A3 and the A243/M25. Alternative access is either through Cobham (A245) or Hook and then Southbound on the Kingston Rd (A243).
- 1.1 The section between the A3 and Oxshott is sparsely populated with very few frontages and is designated as a 40mph. The 30mph restriction from the village boundary in the North to the South is subject to a 30mph restriction albeit that it does appear to stop short of the 'built up' area at the Southern end. Between the village and the A243 Kingston Rd R/A the restriction is 40mph, similar to the Northern section it is sparsely populated with minimal frontages.
- 1.4 The M25 emergency strategic diversion between junctions 10 - 8 is via the A3 and A243 to Tolworth then A240 and Ewell Bypass to Burgh Heath and the A217 at Tadworth then rejoining the M25. The emergency strategic diversion route between junctions 8-10 follows the same route in the opposite direction. Wherever possible Surrey County Council will seek for this route to be used when needed, for example during an incident on the M25 or planned works requiring carriageway closure. However, each occasion has to be judged on its own merit and deviation may occur, for example if there are works occurring on the diversion route, if there is concern over excessive congestion at junctions or if it is considered this is too circuitous for the nature of the diversion, it is also noted that there is a low bridge at Tolworth meaning the diversion is inappropriate for vehicles over 4.6m in height. The A244 has in recent time been used as a diversion route for the M25, particularly where overnight closures have been needed associated with the overhead gantry work on the motorway.
- 1.5 The Department for Transport guidance on the introduction of 20mph restrictions is clear, 20mph and associated traffic calming should not typically be introduced on roads serving a strategic nature and should only be introduced where there is evidenced need.

- 1.6 When introducing a HGV restriction a relevant Traffic Regulation Order is required. Where there is significant objection, for example from key stakeholders such as the emergency services, haulage companies or adjacent highway authorities, a public enquiry is required to hear the case if the Council wishes to proceed further. Public enquiries require robust evidence to be provided to allow for thorough consideration of the issue to occur. Councils must therefore be confident of winning the case when embarking on such a route given the resource implications involved, both in Officer time and financial cost.
- 1.7 The A243 Kingston Road is part of the Low Emission Zone from Marldon Rushett Northbound.

## 2 ANALYSIS

- 2.0 Collision analysis from Police records shows approximately fourteen collisions in the past five years (four serious and ten slight). Only one though is identified as being speed related and there is no clear pattern to causation/location, generally they appear to be rear shunts or vehicles turning right in to oncoming vehicles.
- 2.1 Further to receipt of the petition previous traffic data has been analysed and new surveys undertaken in Oxshott to ascertain the number of vehicles in excess of 18T. The results are as follows:

	<b>NORTH (DAY)</b>	<b>NORTH (NIGHT)</b>	<b>SOUTH (DAY)</b>	<b>SOUTH (NIGHT)</b>
<b>All Traffic (May 2010)</b>	10,049	N/A	10,346	N/A
<b>HGVs 7.5T + (May 2010)</b>	199 (estimate)	N/A	205 (estimate)	N/A
<b>HGV 18T + (August 2011)</b>	121	6	94	4

- 2.2 In May 2010, the route carried approximately 10,000 vehicles per day (07:00-19:00) in each direction. Of which around 400 were classified as over 7.5T. The recent survey (August 2011) recorded 94 vehicles being over 18T between 07:00 and 19:00 and 4 overnight travelling Southbound. Northbound, 121 vehicles over 18T were recorded between 07:00 and 19:00 and 6 overnight.
- 2.3 It is recognised that the M25 diversion associated with the recent overnight works resulted in increased traffic in the village. However, the alternative routes would have either been through Cobham or up to Hook and down the Kingston Rd. As stated above the A243 is part of the Low Emission Zone and further to discussion between Surrey County Council and the Highways Agency it was agreed that the A244 could be used as the agreed strategic diversion route. The alternative route through Cobham being seen as inappropriate for such vehicle flow.

- 2.4 A poorly reinstated utility trench exacerbated the impact of HGVs using the route, with residents contacting the Council about issues regarding noise and vibration. Further to these reports the trench has been repaired and it is envisaged the issue should be eased.
- 2.5 Given the lack of alternative routes and likely objections it is not proposed that the Committee should resolve to introduce a HGV restriction on this link. The route is as previously stated an A Road and is of strategic nature to its users. The need for such a restriction would also be open to scrutiny given the low number of vehicles using the route recorded as in excess of 18T.
- 2.6 The speed limits to the North and South of Oxshott are entirely appropriate to the characteristic of the road. These two sections of the A244 are subject to 40mph restrictions, with average speeds in excess of 40 mph and to lower further would be likely to result in non-compliance without significant engineering measures. It would also be difficult for highway users to understand the benefit of introducing a restriction in either location given the lack of frontages.
- 2.7 There does appear to be some scope to extend the speed limit in Oxshott Southbound to the edge of the 'built up' area. However, to do so would require new signage and amendment to the Traffic Regulation Order. An approximate cost would be in the region of £12000. However, it should be noted that no detailed investigation has taken place in terms of identifying landownership and location of nearby power supply, which would be needed given it is on an A Road. Members may be minded to include this option in their consideration of a future years programme, although it should be noted there have been no collisions in this area. It is understood that there has been request in the past to start the 30mph at or around Hare Lane in advance of the rail bridge, this hasn't been progressed previously as it was considered that drivers would not understand the need for a 30mph in this location nor there being justification in terms of collisions.
- 2.8 There has recently been speed enforcement taking place in the village and it is considered that this should continue. It is also understood that the offer has been made for local residents to take part in a community speedwatch initiative in the village. Since receiving the petition the Local Member has requested approximate costings for the creation of a section of hard standing to enable mobile van enforcement to take place. From experience of similar schemes elsewhere it would be estimated that this would cost between £15,000 and £20,000. Similar to above it may be that Members wish to consider this as a scheme for inclusion in a future years Programme, there have though been no collisions in this location.
- 2.9 The introduction of a 20mph restriction in the centre of the village would not be recommended given the lack of justification in terms of collisions. Likewise the guidance from Department for Transport is clear in that

traffic calming and 20mph restrictions should not be introduced on roads of a strategic nature, particularly A-Roads. It is recognised that there is scope for pedestrian conflict outside the Victoria Pub and the Butchers by vehicles over-riding the footway/Pub forecourt and pedestrians being forced in to the road due parking arrangements at the Pub. The land does though belong to the Pub and the Butchers. For any investigation in to the scope to introduce a footway a budget would be needed. However, this year's funding is fully allocated.

### **3 OPTIONS**

- 3.0 The discussion above highlights the key issues raised in the petition and Officer views. It is not considered that introducing inappropriate speed limits or a weight restriction constitute real alternative options given the lack of justification and that this road is classified as an A road.
- 3.1 Members may wish to consider the options of the short speed limit extension, hard standing for mobile enforcement and footway investigation in the village centre as part of a future year's programme. However this year's funding is already committed.

### **4 CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 At the time of writing informal discussion has taken place with the Freight Transport Association, Surrey Police and Royal Borough of Kingston. Approaches are also being made to Transport for London and Highways Agency. To date all organisations approached have said it is likely that they would object to any proposals to introduce a weight limit on this road. Surrey Police were also asked for views on the amendment of existing speed limits and they concur with the Officer comments above.

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

- 5.1 The precise costs of the suggested measures are unknown at this stage, it would be anticipated that:
- A weight restriction as per request would cost in excess of £20,000 and likely to be subject to Public Enquiry, therefore in reality much higher.
  - The short speed limit extension would be likely to cost in the region of £12,000
  - Introducing hard standing to assist mobile enforcement would be likely to cost between £15,000 and £20,000.
  - The footway in the village centre would require funding to be allocated to investigation and design prior to being able to give an approximate figure.

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

- 6.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

## 7 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

## 8 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Given the reasons above it is recommended that no further action is taken at this time as resources are fully allocated for this financial year. Members may be minded to consider the scheme options highlighted above in their thinking during the development of future years programmes.

## 9 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

9.1 If funding becomes available, it may be possible to progress the schemes identified as options for the future, although they would need to be assessed in terms of cost/benefit and prioritised in relation to other schemes across the Borough.

9.2 If it becomes apparent that the A244 through Oxshott is subject to an increase in personal injury collisions then this trend will be picked up in the normal way through the Elmbridge Casualty Reduction Working Group. The Group consists of Officers from the Casualty Reduction Group, Road Safety officers, Surrey Highways, Surrey Police, Surrey Fire & Rescue.

**LEAD OFFICER:** Matthew Scriven  
North East Area Team Manager  
**TEL NUMBER:** 0300 200 1003  
**E-MAIL:** highways@surreycc.gov.uk

**CONTACT OFFICER:** Matthew Scriven  
North East Area Team Manager  
**TEL NUMBER:** 0300 200 1003  
**E-MAIL:** highways@surreycc.gov.uk

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:** None