



**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL
LOCAL COMMITTEE EPSOM & EWELL
2 March 2009**

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Question 1 Lisa Morris

Re: Speed Limit Horton Lane

I would like to request that the speed limit on Horton Lane is reduced from 40mph to 30mph, with the relevant controls in place (such as speed cameras / bumps) to ensure that this is adhered to, in particular for the stretch of road which runs between the residential area of Manor Park to one side, and the public recreational areas of Horton Country Park on the other. Please could you ensure that this request reaches the relevant person who may take this further? Please also let me know if you are not the relevant organisation to contact in order to action this request.

As mentioned in recent governmental advertising campaigns, the damage that may be inflicted by a vehicle traveling at 40mh is considerably more than that at 30mph. In addition, it is recommended that the speed limit in most built up areas, towns, and villages, and wherever there are lampposts, is 30mph. There are lampposts running along the entire stretch of Horton Lane, which is also adjacent to a built-up, residential area (Manor Park). Therefore, I believe that governmental requirements also dictate that the speed limit should be 30mph along this road. Please see the links below for more information regarding recent campaigns concerning speed limits along roads with lampposts:

<http://www.speedorsafety.com/street-lights-campaign/>
<http://www.speedorsafety.com/its-30-for-a-reason/>
<http://www.smartdriving.co.uk/Driving/DefensiveDriving/Speed/UK Speed limits.html>

I believe that speed control measures are an absolute necessity, in addition to a reduction in the speed limit, as in my experience (having lived just metres from the road for the past 4 years), and from my viewpoint as both a motorist and a pedestrian, the vast majority of drivers using Horton Lane consistently exceed the current limit of 40mph, as there are no measures in place to prevent them from doing so.

This issue should be tackled before there is a significant speed-related casualty problem, as a preventative measure, rather than waiting until many unnecessary accidents have occurred and lives are wasted. Action should not be delayed until there a long history of a speed-related casualty problem has been established.

In summary, my reasons for wishing the speed limit to be reduced to 30mph (with the necessary speed controls such as speed cameras) are:

1. To reduce noise pollution for residents of Manor Park (the residential area which is directly adjacent to Horton Lane) – this is reaching unsustainable levels for those houses nearest to the road.

2. To reduce air pollution for residents of Manor Park – as above.
3. To create a safer crossing for the many pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders who use all the family-oriented destinations which have direct access off Horton Lane: Horton Country Park, L'Equine Horse Riding School, David Lloyds gym, the pathway to Epsom Common, Horton Children's Farm, etc.
4. To reduce the risk for accidents (many animals have already been killed on this road – This could easily be a child one day).
5. To reduce the occurrence of speeding and the proliferation of 'boy racers' (especially in the summer months) along Horton Park – bikers and boy racers use this stretch of road due to the complete lack of speed controls.
6. To reduce the risk of unsociable behaviour in Horton Park (this is a popular area for boy racers to congregate, due to the lack of speed control along Horton Lane).
7. To prevent damage to housing structures on Manor Park due to the high volume of traffic at high speeds, including a large number of heavy goods vehicles (the house I live in frequently shakes when a lorry passes by).
8. To encourage drivers to use a 30mph speed limit as they enter Epsom town (Horton Lane leads ultimately to a roundabout at which point the speed limit changes to 30mph through Epsom).

The stretch of Horton Lane, which I am particularly concerned about, has a 'crossing' in the middle, leading directly across the road, from Manor Park residential area to the entrance of Horton Park and L'Equine Horse Riding Centre. This crossing is frequently used by pedestrians, including a large number of unaccompanied children, families and dog walkers, and also by horses and riders, runners and cyclists, in order to access the recreational area of Horton Park and the Thames Walkway that runs from Horton Park. However, the place at which people cross the road is not clearly marked out as a crossing (apart from two bollards) and there is no means of ensuring that traffic slows for the crossing, such as traffic lights, road markings, etc. Horton Lane is also crossed by pedestrians at various other points along the road, in order to access David Lloyds gym, Horton Children's Farm, and (at the opposite end), a pathway leading to Epsom Common.

I look forward to your comments.

Please contact me at any time should you have any questions regarding the above. Should signatures showing support of this request be required, I would be happy to obtain these. My views as set out above are mirrored by a large number of residents of Manor Park, and also by the visitors to Horton Country Park, David Lloyds gym, and the other amenities, which are accessed from Horton Lane.

Officer Response:

The 40mph speed limit on Horton Lane was imposed when the road was rebuilt as part of the Hospital Cluster Development. This speed limit was considered appropriate because:

Roundabouts were introduced to help reduce speeds at junctions

Off road cycle tracks have been provided

Controlled pedestrian, cycle and equestrian crossing have been installed at most of the crossing points and pedestrian activity is quite low.

The new housing developments are set back and do not front onto the road.

For these reasons the 40mph speed limit is still considered appropriate however concerns have been raised in the past about speeding vehicles and a number of options have been considered to tackle this including speed enforcement.

In the three years to the end of August there has been just one slight injury on the stretch between Hook Road and Oakwood Avenue, there was a fatal collision at the roundabout junction with Oakwood Avenue, and one slight injury collision at the roundabout junction with Chantilly Way. Further south there was one serious injury collision and two slight injury collisions near Abbots Avenue. This is on a stretch about 1.5km long. Therefore although of course any collision is one too many, there are no plans to introduce regular core enforcement at this site. Fixed speed cameras on this stretch of road are not appropriate because the investment in this equipment is reserved for the very worst collision hotspots where there has been serious history of collisions and excessive speeds. We have limited resources and it would be negligent not to use them at the sites that need the most attention first.

Mobile speed enforcement has been carried out and there is ample room to position a mobile enforcement vehicle at the side of the road. Surrey Police have had limited success preventing antisocial driving and speeding, largely associated with motorcyclists, as it seems that the motorcyclists will typically visit the site to see if there is any police enforcement and will then move on if there is any police presence. They will then come back later after the police have moved on. Therefore in order to deter motorcyclists from using this stretch, there would need to be a permanent police presence nearly all the time over the weekends and summer evenings. The Police do not have the resources to provide the level of regular enforcement at this site that would be required to provide a permanent deterrent to antisocial driving.

A further option that has been considered is the provision of thermoplastic rumble strips on the carriageway, possibly at either end of the stretch of road between the roundabout junctions with Long Grove Road and Hook Road. It was suggested that this may provide a deterrent in that it may make this stretch of road less attractive to motorcyclists in that it would cause an unpleasant vibration to the motorcycles if they travel over it too fast. Rumble strips can be noisy for local residents and it not recommended that they are located within 150m of residential property.

If vehicles are currently not adhering to a 40 mph speed limit then it is very unlikely that they would adhere to a 30mph speed limit without extensive traffic calming or enforcement. These would both be very expensive.

The pedestrian crossing facilities at between the Manor Park residential area and entrance of Horton Park and L'Equine Horse Riding Centre will be looked at to review their effectiveness in the next few months.

Question 2

Nickie Roberts

Re: The Parade – traffic congestion

We live in The Parade and are increasingly concerned about the traffic both on our road and the road that runs past Dulshott Green to the new flats/back of the Council building. In particular:

1. The Parade seems be attracting taxis from a local cab company who are using the road to wait for fares, either in one of the few spaces to park as well as at the end of the cul de sac. They are taking valuable parking spaces, blocking the end

of the road, which is essential to allow cars to turn, as well as sending out a message that The Parade is available for this sort of use.

Officer Response:

Parking enforcement is carried out by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council on behalf of Surrey County Council. Epsom and Ewell are also the Taxi licensing authority. There is a lack of taxi ranks generally in Epsom and both Surrey County and Epsom and Ewell Borough are looking at ways of improving provision around the town. At present it has been agreed that additional night time taxi stands can be provided in the High Street however daytime provision is limited due to a lack of suitable locations. The use of The Parade by taxi's will be discussed to see if any further enforcement is possible or necessary.

2. General traffic throughout the length of the road is intrusive and increasing. This appears to be commuters and shoppers, including people waiting in cars for friends/family who are shopping locally, particularly in Argos judging by the bags we see being carried. As well as taking up the limited parking spaces available along the road, residents are subjected to an almost endless stream of traffic day and night by people driving up and down looking for somewhere to park, as well as blocking the end of the road, to an extent that is sometimes dangerous. We are lucky as we have off-street parking, but routinely find it blocked (day and night) by other people's cars - even if we have our own car parked on it.

Officer Response:

Parking spaces or unrestricted road space in The Parade can currently be used by anyone, whether resident, visitor or local worker. In order to restrict the use of the spaces to residents and in so doing reduce traffic levels, a residents parking scheme would need to be introduced in Epsom. This would be a large and expensive project that would need to be funded from the highways budget. At present there are no plans to introduce residents parking however it may be considered in the future.

3. With the massive flats development on Church Street, there is significantly more traffic along the Dulshott Green road creating considerable noise pollution (as residents predicted when opposing the flats).

Officer Response:

The access road to the new flats and the back of the Town Hall is not an adopted public highway. This issue will be raised with Epsom and Ewell Borough Council.

4. The car park in Dulshott Green is attracting "racers" who use it as a meeting point/race circuit - again noise pollution, dangerous and intimidating.

Officer Response:

The car park is owned by Epsom and Ewell Borough Council. This issue will be raised with them.

Question: the above gives an idea of the noise and visual pollution we are increasingly being subjected to, plus the difficulties residents are experiencing in getting safely in and out of the road before we attempt to find somewhere to park.

Will the Council consider:

- 1) providing screening along the Dulshot Green side (ie, opposite The Parade) to offer some protection from increasing noise and visual pollution and,

- 2) will the Council consider putting up signage at the point of the Council office indicating the remainder of The Parade is Access only to Residents to offer some protection from the constant commuter/shopper traffic which is noisy, polluting and potentially dangerous given the nursery, retirement home, other residents and pedestrians that use The Parade throughout the day and night.

Officer Response:

Creating an 'access only' restriction on The Parade would require a Traffic Regulation Order to be made which could only be enforced by Surrey Police. Surrey Police are unlikely to support this proposal as they would be unable to provide adequate enforcement of the restriction without diverting resources from other duties. The introduction of 'residents only' parking restrictions in The Parade would be a better way of reducing traffic levels and this could be enforced by Epsom and Ewell Borough. At present there are no plans to introduce residents parking however it may be considered in the future.

Screening is an issue for Epsom and Ewell Borough Council and this issue will be raised with them.

Question 3 Daphne Anspach

Re: Parking issues – Bracken Path

I live in Bracken Path on Epsom Common, which is an area of Victorian houses spread around green areas. Hardly any houses have garages or hard standing to accommodate their cars, which are therefore parked on the highway. The roads are winding and it is known that large lorries and dustcarts may find it difficult to get around.

There is one particular small circular green historically known as Goose Green. The grass verge is often damaged by large lorries and has been filled in - some concrete posts were also put in at the end of last week. However, we understand there is a suggestion that yellow lines (or rather the conservation colour of primrose) be placed around the inner edge and possibly the outer edge of this green.

Several houses front this green whose owners have to park their cars around the green. However, what is not immediately obvious is that there are several more houses, which are not visible from the road - they only have small pathways leading to their front doors. The owners of these houses also have to park their cars around this green (this is 9 cars in addition to the 4/5 whose houses immediately front the green). If yellow lines were put in place these residents (including myself) would have absolutely nowhere to park our vehicles which we all need for our jobs.

We have suggested in the past that the actual diameter of the green is made smaller so that the roadway can be widened to allow vehicles to pass easily, or that the council use smaller dustcarts.

We understand that committee members may be making a site visit to this area. I have already spoken to Colin Taylor and he said that residents can be present during this visit.

The placing of yellow lines around this green would make the situation for local residents impossible and house values would drop if there was nowhere within a reasonable distance to park our cars.

Officer Response:

Your comments regarding possible future waiting restrictions in Bracken Path have been noted.

Following the pending site meeting to this area and taking residents concerns into consideration, Cllr Colin Taylor will advise officers whether the current recommendations should be progressed, amended or withdrawn, Should they then be progressed and advertised (in their present form or amended), there will be further opportunity to object/comment during the statutory consultation period.

Question 4 Ron Gee OBE

Re: Epsom & Ewell High School

'I have spoken with Mrs Mason about the future of Epsom & Ewell High School as this matter gives me considerable concern. This school is in the most densely populated part of the borough with more house building planned. I was a governor of the school for some thirty years, with a spell as chairman, I was also an Epsom councillor for over thirty years and I still have considerable interest in respect of Epsom and its environs. I am concerned about the future of the school, there is not question that a school is essential in that location and plans need to be drawn up now otherwise there will be a shortage of school places at secondary level in this area. I would ask that this problem is discussed at the Local Committee with a view to putting the matter to the County Council.

Officer Response:

The County Council fully agrees that there is an ongoing need for a school in the area and is working to address the criticisms in the recent Ofsted and ensure that Epsom and Ewell High School delivers a good standard of education and that parents will be happy to choose this school for their children in future. The interim headteacher has already made outstanding progress in these regards and we believe she has the full support of parents and staff.

The interim governing body has just appointed a new substantive head of the school who will take over in September and we are confident that progress will continue apace and that the school will be out of special measures in a very short time.'