



OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (EPSOM AND EWELL)

REIGATE ROAD, EWELL – OBJECTIONS TO TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER

8 MARCH 2010

KEY ISSUE

To report back to committee on the objections received following advertisement of the Traffic Regulation Order for introducing a speed limit reduction in Reigate Road from 40 mph to 30 mph between Ewell By Pass and a point 100 metres south of the junction with Longdown Lane North.

SUMMARY

At their meeting held on 2 March 2009, the Surrey County Council Local Committee agreed that a traffic regulation order be advertised. Following advertisement objection(s) have been received and Members are asked to consider and give decision on whether they should be upheld.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee (Epsom and Ewell) is asked to agree:

- (i) That the objections to the proposed Traffic Regulation Order are not upheld and the proposed speed limit reduction be implemented.

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A pattern of accidents has been identified in Reigate Road between Ewell By Pass and Longdown Lane North some of which are speed related. As a result, a report was taken to the Local Committee on 2 March 2009 which set out the case for the speed limit along this part of Reigate Road to be reduced from 40 mph to 30 mph.
- 1.2 The report included details of initial consultation with Surrey Police and set out the extent of the speed limit change that the Police would support.
- 1.3 Reigate Road forms part of the A240 and extends from Ewell By Pass, where it joins the A24, south through the Borough of Reigate and Banstead as far as Burgh Heath, where it joins the A217 Brighton Road.
- 1.4 The whole of the A240 Reigate Road is served by street lighting. At present, the speed limit between Ewell By Pass and Drift Bridge is 40 mph and south of Drift Bridge to Brighton Road it is set at the default limit of 30 mph.
- 1.5 The nature of the road is reasonably consistent throughout although there are relatively fewer residential premises bounding the road immediately north of Drift Bridge.
- 1.6 If the proposed restriction were to be implemented, Reigate Road would be 30 mph throughout except for a length of approximately 1 kilometre between the proposed southern limit of the new restriction and Drift Bridge.
- 1.7 Prior to advertisement of the proposed restriction, Surrey Police had indicated that they would not support a speed limit reduction over the area that would remain at 40 mph as it could not be justified in terms of the previous accident history and did not comply with the County's own speed limit policy.

2 ANALYSIS

- 2.1 The objection period for the advertised traffic order closed on 26th February. On 19th February, one objection had been received; from Cllr David Wood, Divisional Member for Epsom and Ewell North East.
- 2.2 During a discussion to resolve the objection, Cllr Wood indicated that his purpose was to have the proposed restriction extended to include that section of the road between Longdown Lane North and Drift Bridge as part of the new restriction thus making the whole of Reigate Road subject to a 30 mph speed limit.

- 2.3 If the road were to be 30 mph throughout, by virtue of the existence of street lighting, it would become illegal to display repeater signs reminding drivers of the imposed limit. With the arrangement proposed, it will be necessary to retain the existing terminal signs facing southbound drivers approaching Drift Bridge and place new terminal signs, indicating 30 mph, facing northbound drivers approaching the junction of Longdown Lane North. Thus, the proposed arrangement may prove more effective in keeping drivers advised of the prevailing speed limit and be more effective in reducing overall speeds.
- 2.4 Complaints are regularly received by Surrey Highways from drivers who feel they have been “caught out” by the existing 30 mph speed limit along the southern part of Reigate Road, which travels through Reigate and Banstead. It is said that the width and nature of the road “feels” that it should have a 40 mph limit and attempts by Surrey Police have been resisted in the past to have the limit raised to 40mph.
- 2.5 On any given road, in spite of the prevailing limit, many drivers will travel at a speed at which they feel safe and will make such judgements based on the environment through which they are driving and prevailing conditions. Reducing speed limits to unrealistic levels can lead to increased non-compliance and an unsustainable burden on policing resources.

3 OPTIONS

- 3.1 To make the order as advertised and implement the proposed speed restriction within the limits previously agreed.
- 3.2 To make the order as advertised and implement the proposed speed restriction within the limits previously agreed. In addition, officers to arrange a meeting with Surrey Police, the Committee Chairman, Cllr Wood and Cllr Frost to discuss the case for further extending the 30 mph speed limit to cover the whole of Reigate Road.
- 3.3 To uphold the objection and withdraw the advertised proposal to reduce the speed limit.
- 3.4 To uphold the objection and withdraw the advertised proposal to reduce the speed limit. Then to bring a later report to Committee seeking approval to advertise an alternative speed limit reduction order for the whole area presently subject to 40 mph, but only if this action is recommended and has the agreement of Surrey Police.

4 CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 Consultations have included discussions with Surrey Police and other emergency services.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE FOR MONEY

- 5.1 Implementation would include reconfiguration of existing signs on the Ewell By Pass roundabout and new illuminated terminal signs south of Longdown Lane North. However, this could be carried out at relatively modest cost and could be covered by current LTP funding.

6 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no perceived equality and diversity implications.

7 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Driving in excess of the speed limit is a criminal offence. Implementation of inappropriate speed limits can lead to the criminalisation of otherwise law abiding citizens.

8 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 It is recommended the Committee agree to the option set out in 3.2.

9 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The recommended option will allow the advertised restriction to be implemented in accordance with the Committee's original wishes and give opportunity for those Members most directly affected to have discussions with officers and Surrey Police regarding what further measures may be appropriate.

10 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 10.1 If it is agreed the advertised order be made, the scheme will be implemented forthwith.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: none

Version No. Date: Time: Initials: No of annexes: 0