



**WODELAND AVENUE, GUILDFORD
PROPOSED 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT**

GUILDFORD LOCAL COMMITTEE

18th JUNE 2008

KEY ISSUE

This report considers whether or not a 20 mph speed limit should be implemented in Wodeland Avenue, Guildford.

SUMMARY

The report sets out the results of traffic counts, speed surveys and accident data in Wodeland Avenue, together with the relevant County Council policy and the views of Surrey Police. It concludes that the current 30 mph speed limit should be maintained.

Report by

LOCAL HIGHWAYS MANAGER

Surrey Atlas Ref.

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GUILDFORD B.C. WARD(S)

FRIARY & ST. NICOLAS

COUNTY ELECTORAL DIVISION(S)

GUILDFORD SOUTH-WEST

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to agree:

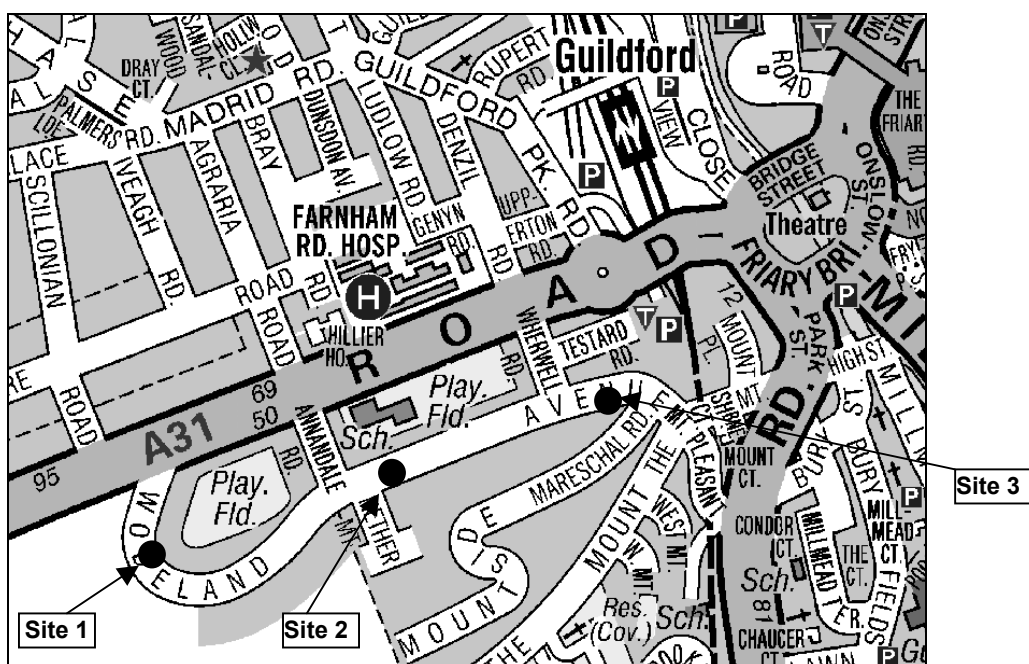
- (i) that no change be made to the existing 30 mph speed limit in Wodeland Avenue.

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

- 1 Wodeland Avenue is a residential road, with parking bays on both sides. When occupied, the parking bays reduce Wodeland Avenue to single file in places. The road is currently subject to a 30 mph speed limit.
- 2 The road, and others in the immediate vicinity, have been the subject of a number of studies over many years into measures to reduce the speed and volume of rat-running traffic, together with residents' concerns about road safety.
- 3 When a review of the minor schemes programme was undertaken last year, a scheme for physical traffic calming measures for roads in this area was deleted from the programme on the understanding that a speed assessment to determine whether a 20 mph speed limit might be applied to the road.

ANALYSIS

- 4 Traffic counts and speed surveys were undertaken for a seven-day period commencing Tuesday 11th December 2007. The speed surveys were located at three different sites. The approximate locations of these sites are shown below.



5 The survey results are summarised in **TABLE 1** below.

Location	Direction	Daily number of vehicles	85 th Percentile Speed	Mean Speed
Site 1	Southbound	778	29.1mph	24.5 mph
	Northbound	645	31.4mph	27.1 mph
Site 2	Eastbound	1530	30.2mph	24.5 mph
	Westbound	880	30.9mph	25.2 mph
Site 3	Eastbound	2124	25.1mph	21.1 mph
	Westbound	1326	24.0mph	19.7 mph

TABLE 1: Results of speed surveys

6 The results show a predominant eastbound traffic flow. The 85th percentile speeds are highly commensurate with the current 30mph speed limit. The 85th percentile speed is the speed at or below which 85% of vehicles are travelling.

7 There have been two Personal Injury Accidents in the last three-year period. In one case the driver fell asleep. In the other case a vehicle reversed into Wodeland Avenue and was struck by a second vehicle. In both cases the injuries sustained were slight. Neither cites speed as a contributory factor.

OPTIONS

8 National criteria and County Council policy allow for two methods of introducing a 20mph speed limit:

- A *20mph limit*, indicated by terminal and repeater signs;
- A *20mph zone* using speed limit terminal signs together with suitable traffic calming measures to provide a self-enforcing environment.

9 A 20mph limit is only appropriate where traffic speeds are already low, and further traffic calming measures are not needed. The 85th percentile speed would have to be 24mph or less. In this case, the 85th percentile speeds are not sufficiently low to introduce a 20mph limit.

10 A 20mph zone could be introduced, and appropriate traffic calming measures constructed. Wodeland Avenue already benefits from the traffic calming effect of its formal parking bays. The reduction of the road to single file in places means that drivers must pass in turn, and give way to oncoming traffic. Therefore no further speed reduction would be achieved by introducing horizontal deflections (chicanes and pinch points).

- 11 Speed reduction could be achieved by introducing vertical deflections (road humps). Such a scheme would be highly expensive, and would require substantial works:
- Construction of the vertical deflections themselves
 - Drainage works to prevent ponding upstream of the vertical deflections
 - Street lighting improvements to ensure compliance with latest standards for illumination of the vertical deflections.
 - Installation of traffic signs to warn drivers
- 12 Vertical deflections are the most effective means of reducing traffic speeds. However they are not universally popular among residents. Perceived disadvantages include noise and vibration, inconvenience to drivers, damage to vehicles and injury to vehicle occupants. Surrey County Council policy is to consult residents in advance of introducing such a scheme. It is unlikely that residents would support vertical deflections unless there is a compelling case.
- 13 Notwithstanding the need to win support from residents, the cost and benefit of any proposal for vertical deflections must be considered. It is highly unlikely that the Personal Injury Accidents cited above would have been influenced by the vehicle speeds in each case; neither cites speed as a contributory factor. Therefore the economic benefit of introducing traffic calming is zero. Therefore Surrey County Council could not justify the cost of introducing such a scheme at the present time. Indeed Surrey County Council could face criticism for not investing in road safety improvements at sites elsewhere in Surrey, where there are persistent patterns of Personal Injury Accidents.

CONSULTATIONS

- 14 Surrey Police must be consulted on any proposal to reduce a speed limit, to obtain an understanding of the level of enforcement that could be applied and how effective that might be in ensuring a significant reduction in speed. The view of Surrey Police is that traffic calming would be needed to reduce vehicle speeds to an acceptable level. In addition they suggested that if a 20mph limit or zone was to be introduced it should be done on an area basis, not on individual roads. They conclude that the evidence suggests that the current 30mph speed limit is the most appropriate for the road.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 15 Subject to agreement of the recommendations, this report has no financial implications. If the Committee were to decide to proceed with a 20 mph speed limit or zone there would be cost implications for which no allowance has been made during the current financial year. In this event it is suggested that the matter be referred to the Transportation Task Group for consideration.

CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 17 The existing 30mph speed limit in Wodeland Avenue is very well suited to the site. To reduce the speed limit to 20mph, expensive traffic calming would be required; Surrey County Council could not justify the cost of such traffic calming. It is therefore concluded that the current 30mph speed limit should be maintained.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS	None
