

A25 REIGATE ROAD, DORKING SPEED LIMIT ASSESSMENT

**Mole Valley Local Committee
11 December 2002**

KEY ISSUE:

This report is a response to the petition presented to this Committee at its meeting on 23 October 2002 regarding the speed and safety of traffic using the A25 Reigate Road, Dorking, between the Deepdene Roundabout and The Watermill Public House.

SUMMARY:

This report analyses the concerns and suggestions raised in the petition and details the outcome of the speed limit assessment carried out in respect of the A25 Reigate Road.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is **RECOMMENDED** that the Committee should note the findings of this report.

1. INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

- 1.1 At its meeting on 23 October 2002, Members were presented with a petition from residents of Reigate Road, Deepdene Vale and Punchbowl Lane regarding the speed and safety of traffic using the A25 Reigate Road. In particular the petition requested a reduction in the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph on the A25 Reigate Road, between Deepdene Roundabout and The Watermill Public House as well as the introduction of traffic calming measures to reduce overtaking along the Reigate Road and an increase in Police monitoring of the speed of traffic. The petition contained 106 signatories

2. ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

- 2.1 The A25 Reigate Road is currently subject to a 40mph speed limit between the Deepdene Roundabout and The Watermill Public House. It is a single carriageway road with a central section of hatched roadmarkings also incorporating right turn lanes into minor side roads. Traffic islands and

pedestrian refuges have been provided to shelter right turning movements and restrict overtaking manoeuvres.

- 2.2 The A25 Reigate Road is classified as a county distributor road. Together with primary status routes (such as the A24) county distributor roads form a part of the major road network and are expected to cater for long and medium distance traffic with origins and / or destinations in Surrey. More specifically these roads have also been identified as being suitable to provide access to and from areas of major population, industrial and commercial centres, and to distribute long and medium distance traffic to smaller towns and settlements and provide access to those places.
- 2.3 The County Council has recently adopted a new speed limit assessment procedure which determines the appropriate speed for any length of road. The first stage of the assessment is to identify the appropriate vehicle speed along the length of road in question. This is carried out using a points scoring system to determine the severity of a number of categories. The existing vehicle speed is then determined by carrying out speed surveys on the road. This measurement is compared to the base speed of the proposed speed limit to determine the appropriate course of action. The base speed is a measurement approximately 7mph or 20% above a proposed speed limit, and is the point at which it is considered that a speed limit will be respected by motorists. Implementing a speed limit where measured vehicle speeds are in excess of the base speed is likely to lead to drivers not complying with the limit as drivers will view the speed limit as being too severe and consequently ignore the limit. In exceptional circumstances a road factor may be applied to increase the base speed. This is determined in a similar manner to the appropriate speed by using a points scoring system to determine the severity of a number of categories.
- 2.4 Under the assessment procedure, in locations where the appropriate vehicle speed closely matches the posted speed limit it is not necessary to change the speed limit.
- 2.5 In cases where the appropriate vehicle speeds are above the existing vehicle speed then the only consideration will be if the speed limit needs to be changed to match more closely the appropriate vehicle speed. The only benefit in taking such action would be to bring about a level of consistency throughout the County. It is unlikely that such action would result in increases in vehicle speed, although this should be considered as a possible outcome.
- 2.6 Where the appropriate vehicle speed is below the existing vehicle speed, techniques for slowing vehicles should be evaluated to determine the most cost effective and appropriate measures.
- 2.7 The appropriate speed along the section of Reigate Road in question has been determined as 40mph. Recent 7 day, 24 hour speed surveys undertaken show that the 85%ile speeds measure 43mph in a westbound direction and 44mph in an eastbound direction. This shows reasonable compliance with the 40mph speed limit, and is outside of the limits of the base speed, which for the Reigate Road has been determined as 36mph.
- 2.8 In the last four years ten personal injury accidents have been recorded along the A25 Reigate Road between Deepdene Roundabout and The Watermill Public House. There are no cluster sites where the accidents have occurred

and consequently it is difficult to identify an overall causation factor. However, a contributory factor in several accidents was the injudicious movements of traffic entering into and exiting from the minor side roads and the numerous private accesses that exist along this section of Reigate Road. Of the ten accidents recorded only one was speed related.

- 2.9 Consultations on the use of traffic calming measures have indicated that the emergency services oppose traffic calming measures particularly on major routes due to the delay in response times. Additionally major routes will be providing for the movement of long distance traffic as highlighted above, and the presence of traffic calming measures may be influential in the choice of route for these trips. A possible consequence of the installation of traffic calming measures on a major route is the displacement of traffic onto minor roads which are not appropriate for the types of journey that a major route would be used for. It is therefore considered that the installation of traffic calming measures would not be appropriate on the A25 Reigate Road.
- 2.10 Speed limit enforcement is the responsibility of Surrey Police. A copy of this report together with the petition received has been forwarded to Surrey Police for their information.

3. CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 Surrey Police, Surrey Fire and Rescue, and Surrey Ambulance Service have received a copy of this report. Any comments received will be reported verbally to this meeting.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

5. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no sustainable development implications associated with this report.

6. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no crime and disorder implications associated with this report.

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no equalities implications associated with this report.

CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The existing speed limit of 40mph on the A25 Reigate Road, between Deepdene Roundabout and The Watermill Public House has been assessed in accordance with the Surrey County Council speed management policy as being the appropriate speed limit for the road.

The measured 85%ile speeds indicate close compliance with the existing 40mph speed limit, and are significantly in excess of the maximum base speeds appropriate for a 30mph speed limit.

The imposition of traffic calming measures would not be appropriate on Reigate Road due to the likely effect of displacing traffic onto nearby minor roads inappropriate for the movement of traffic that would normally be using Reigate Road.

It is therefore recommended that no action be taken to reduce the speed limit, or to install traffic calming measures.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: Mole Valley Local Committee, 23 October 2002
