

Annex 1

21 January 2010

Ms Michelle Armstrong
Principal Engineer
Surrey Highway
A25 Dorking
Bury Hill Avenue
Dorking
Surrey

22 JAN 2010

MV

92028822

Your ref: MA/92028203

Re: A25 Westcott Road, Dorking – Proposed Imposition of 40mph Speed Limit

Thank you for your letter in which you request that I withdraw my objection to the above proposal. Thank you also for your reply to my email seeking further clarification.

I have given this further consideration and for the reason shown below I am unwilling to withdraw my objection to the proposal.

1. I do not consider the expenditure of somewhere between £15,000 and £16,000 to impose a 40mph in place of the existing 50mph limit on this short section of the A25 to be prudent use of taxpayers' money.
2. The proposed 40mph limit is in fact in excess of the current average speed of 39mph. In effect a revision of the speed limit would simply be an academic exercise costing council taxpayers £15,000+.
3. While the Police may well support this initiative they are unlikely to actively monitor road users' speeds since the average is already below the proposed limit. You refer to the "Drive-smart" campaign which could result in a higher level of enforcement – the campaign ends in 24-weeks time.
4. There are just two residential properties that adjoin the approximately 700m stretch of the A25 to which the proposal refers: both are set well back from the road and possess good sightlines. Over the many years I have used this stretch of road I am unaware of any accident involving vehicles entering or leaving these two houses.
5. As you acknowledge, at peak times traffic speeds are considerably less than the average of 39mph because eastbound traffic on this entire stretch of road is largely stationary because of the traffic light phasing at the end of Vincent Lane in Dorking. Average speed is therefore about 3mph (pedestrians easily keep pace with the traffic).
6. Your letter refers to 11 injury collisions during the 21 month period to September 2009. This astonishes me since I use this stretch of road regularly (at least seven round trips per week) and can only recall one accident in the last five years; this was in the middle of the straight stretch of the road near to the junction with the road to Bury Hill Lake – one car had run into the back of

~~ANNEX 1~~

the car in front. I can only assume the remaining accidents were minor nose-to-tail events which I imagine occur regularly because of stationary traffic.

No stretch of the A25 is perfect and the section referred to is no exception. The exit from the UNUM offices onto the A25 is not ideal if people wish to turn right (i.e. Westward) because of relatively limited visibility to the East. A 40mph limit would make zero difference to this situation. From observation it is clear that the majority of traffic exiting UNUM turns left to Dorking and is unaffected by this problem. I would suggest the most practical manner in which to address the problem is for UNUM to make a planning application to adjust the sightline to the East of Milton Court Lane. I understand they already own the land that would enable this and I presume no local authority would object since this application would be on safety grounds. A further attraction is that this course of action would not entail council taxpayers in any expenditure; this would be reasonable since the only beneficiaries of this work would be the company's staff and visitors.

I hope SCC will recognise that this proposal is not best use of the council taxpayers' funds given the current difficult financial situation SCC finds itself in. If this money really is surplus to the Council's existing requirements I suggest it could be better spent on repairing and maintaining Surrey's road network.

If you intend to proceed with this proposal and it becomes necessary for the Local Committee to consider this I would like this letter to be provided to the committee in support of my objection and I would also like an opportunity to appear and speak at the meeting in further support of my objection.

I am copying in my local SCC councillor Mrs Hazel Watson on this letter for her information.

I am most grateful to you for your kind help in this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Peter Ruck