



Village Gateway Signs on Public Highways in Tandridge

26 January 2007

KEY ISSUE:

To give an update on the provision of Village Gateway Signs in Tandridge.

SUMMARY:

This report to the Local Committee outlines issues regarding the provision of village gateway signs in Tandridge. The report provides details of the current criteria and policies in place for installation of such signs.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Committee is asked to:

support the current policy of providing no more Village Gateway Signs on highways in Tandridge unless they are being used with other physical elements, such as a traffic calming measure.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Village gateway signs have been provided at locations in Tandridge. Whyteleafe and Lingfield are the most recent communities where agreement has been given for the installation of village gateway signs. Whyteleafe signs have been erected and Lingfield signs are to be ordered. In an informal Local Committee Meeting at Oxted Fire Station in September 2005, consensus was reached that no more village gateway signs would be provided after Whyteleafe and Lingfield. Several requests for such signs have been received since then, including a request from Caterham on the Hill Parish Council showing detailed proposals.
- 1.2. Current policy for the provision of Village Gateway Signs in the County, which can be found on the Surrey County Website, states that:

“Gateways should not normally be used in isolation. It is recommended that they are only used to complement more effective speed reducing measures.

Gateways are used to indicate to drivers where the road changes character, for example at the start of a traffic-calming scheme or at the entry to a speed limit zone. Although this can involve some narrowing of the carriageway (effectively a two way throttle), gateways are not a width restriction and must allow access to any vehicle entitled to use the road. Research suggests they can be effective but only when combined with proven speed reducing measures. Otherwise, results indicate that any speed reduction achieved is confined to the close proximity of the gateway itself and to the short term. The benefits of measures designed to alert the driver (such as gateways, rumble devices and change of road surface) are dubious in the longer term and particularly where most drivers are either local or regular users of a route. Therefore, gateways should not normally be used in isolation. It is recommended that they are only used to complement more effective speed reducing measures.

Depending upon the nature of the proposed gateway it may be necessary to gain planning permission in order to erect a gateway. The District Planning Officer should be consulted as early as possible, particularly if the proposed gateway is in a conservation area.”

Item 12

- 1.3. Village Gateway Signs could be one part of traffic calming measures. The Traffic Calming Regulations 1993 provide for a gateway to be used "to indicate the presence in a length or lengths of highway of traffic calming works". Department for Transport recommends using vertical elements (Village Gateway signs, speed limit signs, etc.) in conjunction with horizontal elements (build outs, pinch points, rumble devices, etc) to act as a speed reducing measure.
- 1.4. The Department for Transport has conducted research on the effectiveness of using village gateways as a traffic calming measure. Village Gateway Signs were part of these Gateways, as well as some sort of physical changes. Transport Research Laboratory produced a report and it was found that any speed reduction achieved by a gateway treatment can be extremely local and may be eroded over time.
- 1.5. Gateway signs may contribute to the street scene and location identity of a community however, the highway authorities should only provide Village Gateway Signs when they could contribute to road safety. Any other justifications could lead to proliferation of such signs.
- 1.6. The County Council uses village gateways in combination with Traffic Calming measures and locates them on the village boundary, often in response to a Parish Council request. The County Council also installs Village Gateway Signs in conjunction with terminals to speed limits on the main routes in to a village. Current Village Gateway Signs would be installed in the County to comply with the Traffic Regulations and General Directions 2002 standards.
- 1.7. County or District boundary signs are not necessarily part of Village Gateway Signage.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Village Gateway Signs have been funded through the local allocation budget for Tandridge combined with funding from Parish Councils.

3. CONCLUSION

Village Gateway Signs should be used in conjunction with other measures at sites with speed management issues. Signs could be positioned at the start of a speed limit zone. It is recommended that in future Village Gateway Signs be used only as the current policy states.

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