



## **OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE (TANDRIDGE)**

### **HIGHWAY CONSIDERATIONS FOR OXTED CHALK QUARRY TRAFFIC**

**5 SEPTEMBER 2008**

#### **KEY ISSUE**

To consider the possibilities for amelioration of the problems being caused by traffic accessing Oxted Quarry situated off Chalkpit Lane in Oxted.

#### **SUMMARY**

Operations at Oxted Chalk Quarry increased significantly last year and many more Heavy Goods Vehicles began accessing the site. Local residents and members expressed concerns and the Local Committee considered the matter on 7 May 2008. A further independent study has now been carried out and an Investigation Report has been produced for consideration by the Local Committee. The Investigation Report recommends a staged approach including widening the quarry access, signalling Chalkpit Lane close to the bridge arch, providing traffic calming along Chalkpit Lane and re-routing outward HGVs via an improved Barrow Green Road. The estimated cost of these measures exceeds available budgets. It is therefore recommended that the measures be progressed subject to the availability of funding in the future.

The investigation report does not recommend proceeding with the one-way proposal for the northern section of Chalkpit Lane or the haul road leading on to The Ridge. However, the haul road could be proposed independently through a planning application from the quarry operator.

## 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 The Local Committee considered the highway issues associated with Chalkpit Lane and Oxted Quarry traffic on 7 May this year. It was resolved that:

- (i) the County Council continue to encourage the submission of a planning application for a new haul road within the quarry site, and that
- (ii) a scheme for HGV amelioration measures in Oxted, including a detailed feasibility study for introducing a one-way system in Chalk Pit Lane north of the quarry, be considered for prioritisation with other integrated transport schemes in Tandridge and included in a report to the Local Committee on utilisation of the Local Transport Plan and Local Allocation budget at the next meeting of the Local Committee in June. Also that officers be charged with identifying other possible sources of funds for these measures.

1.2 In June 2008, the Local Committee approved an allocation from the 2008/09 Local Transport Plan budget for investigation work on the Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) problems in Oxted. The funding has enabled the appointment of a consultant to undertake a study to produce an investigation report, which is attached as Annexe 1. The consultant was commissioned to outline all solutions, costs and implications for the HGV traffic problems related to Oxted Chalk Quarry.

1.3 A petition with 425 signatures was presented by local residents at the Local Committee meeting held on 7 March 2008. The petition stated : *“We the undersigned petition Surrey County Council to take immediate action to alleviate the problems caused by HGVs utilising the Chalkpit Quarry in Oxted. The frequency and speed of the HGVs is totally unsuitable for a residential area such as Oxted and as such their routes need to be changed. Whilst we support the proposed new haul route, we urge the Council to consider introducing, within three months, a one way system northbound in Chalkpit Lane from just south of the north entry to Chalkpit Quarry with a no left turn for HGVs onto The Ridge. This would be supported by a designated HGV route from the new A25 Tandridge Lane roundabout along Barrow Green Road and Chalkpit Lane which would have a 30mph speed limit.”*

1.4 A petition with over 1200 signatures was presented at the Local Committee meeting held on 7 May 2008 by Mr Keith Newell, committee member of the Woldingham Action Group. The petition stated:

*“We, the undersigned residents of Chelsham & Farleigh, Godstone, Limsfield, Oxted, Tatsfield, Titsey, Warlingham, Whyteleafe and Woldingham request that the members of the SCC’s Tandridge Local Committee reject any proposal that will increase the number of heavy goods vehicles on The Ridge. An increase in HGV traffic will pose a serious threat to the safety of those using roads in and around our village and particularly to children attending local schools.*

*We feel strongly that the established historic route\* for access and egress to and from the Quarry be enforced by the appropriate legislation.”*

*\*The route referred to being from the A25 roundabout at its junction with Barrow Green Road and passing along that road to its junction with Chalkpit Lane and thus to the Quarry. Vehicles leaving the Quarry will retrace their*

*inward route to return to the A25. Residents' safety will be further enhanced by the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit.*

- 1.5 Many other representations have been received including those from Parish Councils and local residents. The views expressed have helpfully reiterated concerns and provided ideas. Any new ideas were passed to the consultant to consider within the work done to produce the report on possible solutions.

## **2 ANALYSIS**

- 2.1 The Investigation Report attached at Annexe 1 gives possible solutions to ameliorate the problems associated with HGV movements to and from Oxted Chalk Quarry. The study evaluated 18 measures and has resulted in the suggestion of a preferred solution to the north and a preferred solution to the south. The preferred option in the Investigation Report is the solution to the south.
- 2.2 The preferred option suggests a staged approach comprising the following measures :
- Maintain existing voluntary site operator measures.
  - Widen quarry access.
  - Traffic calming between the quarry and Gordons Way.
  - Signal control on Chalkpit Lane at the railway bridge.
  - Traffic management on existing route to A25.
  - Widen Chalkpit Lane south of the quarry.
  - Re-route via Barrow Green Road.
  - Long term, monitor and consider further measures.
- 2.3 Progression of design and implementation for these measures would depend on Local Committee approval and available funding. The estimated costs of the measures exceed £1 million. These costs are initial estimates and would vary depending on design details and circumstances such as land ownership. The costs and time taken for measures such as traffic calming can vary considerably depending on public engagement and the intensity of the measures.
- 2.4 The only sources of funding currently identified for these types of measures are County budgets for integrated transport including the Local Allocation and Local Transportation Plan budgets. Provisional allocations from these budgets for "HGVs in Tandridge" are just £10,000 for the next two financial years, 2009/10 and 2010/11. The Local Committee will have opportunities to reallocate funds, but would also consider other schemes that may have a higher priority. If funding is provided to progress the measures, it will be necessary to phase the design and implementation over a number of years so that costs can be accommodated within budgets.
- 2.5 The only other identified source of funding is from Southern Gravel Limited, specifically for a haul route within the quarry to The Ridge. The company has stated that the proposed new road is going to cost them approximately £700,000. The company is engaging an Ecological Consultant to carry out the habitat survey work that is necessary to accompany a planning application. The submission is expected towards the end of this year, but determination would not be possible before the middle of 2009. Since this is a planning

matter, it would be considered by Surrey County Council's Planning and Regulatory Committee.

### **3 CONSULTATIONS**

- 3.1 The Chairman of the Local Committee and the County Members for Oxted, Warlingham and Caterham Valley have been consulted on a draft copy of this report.

### **4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Local Committee in June 2008 approved an allocation of £10,000 from the 2008/09 Local Transport Plan budget for investigation work on the Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) problems in Oxted. The cost of the work to produce this report has exceeded that allocation but it is anticipated that the overspend can be accommodated within County budgets. No further funding is available for work on the scheme during the current financial year.
- 4.2 The estimated cost exceeding £1 million for the preferred option could not be funded over a short period just from the Local Committee's budgets for Integrated Transport. A future report to the Local Committee will confirm the budgets for next financial year and provide an opportunity to allocate funds for the proposals. It would be necessary to provide funding for the design work in order to determine accurate estimates for the cost of construction.
- 4.3 The proposal by Southern Gravel Limited for a new haul road in the Quarry site would be funded privately.

### **5 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no significant equalities or diversity implications.

### **6 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Surrey Police are working to enforce existing regulations applicable on the highway. The details of any new proposals to be progressed would be discussed with Surrey Police.

### **7 CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 It is regretted that problems of HGV traffic cannot be eliminated in the short term on roads in Oxted and the surrounding area. Many representations have been received from local people expressing their concerns about the situation. This report seeks to advise on which proposals could offer the most suitable way forward for the Local Committee.
- 7.2 The preferred option identified by the Investigation Report is a staged approach including widening the quarry access, signalling Chalkpit Lane

close to the bridge arch, providing traffic calming along Chalkpit Lane and re-routing the outward HGVs via an improved Barrow Green Road. These improvements would need to be planned over a number of years because the estimated costs exceed available funding. The Local Committee could review the relative priority of these measures if resources became available.

- 7.3 The investigation report does not recommend proceeding with the one-way proposal for the northern section of Chalkpit Lane or the haul road leading on to The Ridge. A new haul road within the Oxted Quarry site may be proposed within a planning application. This proposal would not be funded or determined by the Local Committee.

## 8 RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee for Tandridge is asked to agree that:

the following measures be progressed subject to funds being available in 2009/10 and future years :

- Widen existing quarry access point on Chalkpit Lane.
- Traffic calming on residential section of Chalkpit Lane between the quarry and Gordons Way.
- Signal control on Chalkpit Lane at the railway bridge.
- Improve western section of Barrow Green Road to provide designated 2-way route for HGVs to A25.
- Widen Chalkpit Lane south of the quarry.
- Long term, monitor and consider further measures.

## 9 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 9.1 The Local Committee will receive a report on budgets for 2009/10 after the County Council budget setting for that financial year. If funding were allocated to progress the recommended improvements, design work would commence. The Local Committee would be kept informed of progress.
- 9.2 If a planning application for a new haul road were submitted, a report would be prepared for the County Council's Planning & Regulatory Committee.

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<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS:</b>	CHALKPIT LANE AND OXTED QUARRY TRAFFIC report dated 7 May 2008 to the Local Committee.

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